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Official communiqué of the 5775th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 2 November 2007, at 10.40 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

> "At its 5775th meeting, held in private on 2 November 2007, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'Briefing by the President of the International Court of Justice'.
>
> "In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the President extended an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Judge Rosalyn Higgins, President of the International Court of Justice.
>
> "Members of the Council and Judge Higgins had an exchange of views."

United Nations S/PV.5776

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5776th meeting

Tuesday, 6 November 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Wirajuda	(Indonesia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Qahtani
	Russian Federation	Mr. Shcherbak
	Slovakia	Mr. Bartho
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad

Agenda

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

Letter dated 29 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/640)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: At the outset, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Leslie Kojo Christian, Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of October 2007. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Christian for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

Letter dated 29 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/640)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Norway, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Uruguay and Viet Nam, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw attention to document S/2007/640, which contains a letter dated 29 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I welcome the participation of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, at this meeting, and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I pay tribute to the delegation of Indonesia, in particular to Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda, for convening this open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The fact that the Security Council is holding its second open debate this year on this issue demonstrates the importance that the Council rightly attaches to it, as reflected in resolution 1631 (2005).

Since taking office 10 months ago, I have noted the important contributions of a number of regional and subregional organizations, and I have participated in the deliberations of some of their summit meetings. These interactions have been useful occasions to build a common forum and agenda for cooperation. They will also help to inform the report that the Council has asked me to prepare on ways the United Nations can advance coordination with regional organizations in Chapter VIII arrangements.

Today, our partnerships with regional and subregional organizations are stronger and more active than ever. This year alone, we have established a joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force and political mediation in Darfur, and we are consulting on the situation in Somalia. We have cooperated with the European Union in the protection of civilians in Chad and the Central African Republic. We have worked with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Myanmar. We have partnered with the Economic Community of West African States in elections and political situations in West Africa. We have worked with NATO in Afghanistan and Kosovo. We have collaborated with the Organization of American States in support of the electoral process in Haiti. We have held regular consultations with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States on conflict resolution in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. And we have worked with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the European

Union in addressing peace and security concerns in Europe and elsewhere.

These policy and operational activities, spanning conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, are delivering results on the ground as well as lessons for the future. They provide us with a better understanding of our respective strengths and advantages. They have made it possible to respond more quickly at the outset of a crisis and more effectively in post-conflict peacebuilding. We need to build on these strengths and together find better and more efficient ways of tackling global challenges.

The United Nations is committed to helping build up the capacity of regional and subregional organizations to undertake conflict-prevention, peacemaking and peacekeeping tasks in their respective regions. My proposals to the General Assembly to strengthen the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have already reinforced its capacity to work with peacekeeping partners. Similarly, I have presented proposals to the General Assembly for strengthening our Department of Political Affairs. Both illustrate my commitment to enhance the Organization's ability to work with regional partners. By the same token, we are enhancing mediation capacity within the Secretariat and providing resources for initiatives such as the 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union.

We are determined to work more closely and more efficiently together for the mutual benefit of our organizations and Member States and, above all, for the peoples of every region of the world.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing in the Chamber and to deliver condensed versions when speaking.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): Mr. Minister, I would like to thank you for convening this meeting on the very important and timely issue of the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. I welcome the Secretary-General's presence and his comments.

We share the goal set forth for this meeting and the Indonesian concept paper, namely, to discuss the existing and potential capacities of these organizations in the field of peace and security and to identify and develop modalities by which to enhance cooperation between these organizations and the United Nations, including the Security Council.

While the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security remains with the Security Council, regional and subregional organizations play an important role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. This role is clearly spelled out in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and its importance has been emphasized in various Council resolutions and presidential statements.

Regional and subregional organizations often have first-hand understanding of the underlying causes of local conflicts. They understand the local norms and cultures and, in many cases, have enormous influence over the parties in dispute. It is in the Security Council's interest, and that of the United Nations in general, to work with these organizations to prevent conflicts and to resolve them once they occur. The United States supports voluntary contributions to fund the work of the regional organizations.

The Security Council has asked the Secretary-General for a report on how the United Nations can better support arrangements for further cooperation and coordination with regional organizations. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report.

Today, I would like to highlight some of the important contributions of regional organizations. First, I would like to focus on the important role that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plays in promoting peace and security in South-East Asia and beyond. For 40 years, ASEAN has helped to create an environment in South-East Asia that has encouraged dialogue and progress and enabled the countries of the region to resolve differences and problems peacefully and positively. ASEAN is working to stand by itself as an organization, which we applaud. As it moves ahead, one of its main challenges will be dealing with the problems and the threat to regional security posed by one of its members. ASEAN's bold statement on 27 September on the brutal crackdown on peaceful protestors and Buddhist monks in Burma demonstrated to the military regime the organization's deep concern over its abuses of the political, economic and human rights of the Burmese people. ASEAN made clear that these gross violations do indeed affect the stability of the region.

Secondly, I would like to address the important role of subregional organizations in mitigating conflict in Africa. The African Union (AU) is playing a critical role in Darfur. The United States commends the continuing commitment and contribution of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) amidst the casualties it has suffered in the face of the violent attacks in Darfur. We also applaud the important and continued role that the AU is playing with its participation in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The role of the AU is critical for the successful transition of AMIS to UNAMID. We look forward to close cooperation with the AU, and we view its role in UNAMID and in garnering political support for its deployment and operations as an excellent example of the importance of regional organizations in mitigating conflict in Africa.

Thirdly, the European Union (EU) is also contributing to peace and stability in Africa. On 25 September the Security Council approved the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), a multidimensional presence consisting mostly of United Nations civilian police and EU peacekeeping troops. MINURCAT's objective is to protect the refugees and internally displaced persons in the area. Its ultimate goal is to create security conditions conducive to a voluntary, secure and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons. We commend the involvement of the EU in this effort.

Fourthly, the Organization of American States (OAS) has played an indispensable role in facilitating peace processes and promoting stability in the Western Hemisphere. In Haiti, for example, the OAS mission has played a central role in helping to maintain stability following the resignation of President Aristide, and its technical experts provided crucial support in facilitating the elections and the re-establishment of a democratic government that followed. Furthermore, the ongoing efforts of the OAS will result in the establishment of a permanent electoral registry for the first time in Haiti's history.

Fifth, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has helped to build democratic institutions and promote human rights and non-violent conflict resolution. OSCE election monitoring represents the gold standard for international observation missions. The Unites States continue to strongly support OSCE activities and believes its standards and commitment offer positive examples for consideration by other regional organizations.

We would also like to pay tribute to the contributions of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other regional organizations to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, we recognize that regional organizations will play an increasing role in the way we solve peace and security issues. We also recognize that, just as there are differences in ways that various regional organizations help to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council must be flexible in its approach to working with them, based on the unique facts of each case. Cooperation with regional organizations can and will take many forms.

The Security Council must work with regional and subregional organizations to enhance their capacity and ability to deal with the various challenges they face. As noted in the draft presidential statement, the Council should also consider how to further strengthen interaction and cooperation with these organizations in accordance with the United Nations Charter, taking into account the proposals of the Secretary-General. That cooperation will be essential to enabling early responses to disputes and emerging crises and to fulfilling this body's responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): First of all, I wish to thank you, Mr. Minister, for organizing this debate on such a vital issue. It is an honour to have you among us today in the Security Council. Thank you for the very well-focused concept paper, which by itself highlights the centrality of this issue. We welcome you. We are always very pleased to have the Secretary-General among us. We like to think that he is one of us.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union (EU). I shall limit myself to some supplementary remarks.

Italy attaches the greatest importance to the role in the maintenance of international peace and security assumed by regional and subregional organizations. We look with favour to the definition of more-incisive modalities to deepen their cooperation with the United Nations, and thus we welcome your initiative, Mr. President. We also welcome the initiatives that the Secretary-General referred to earlier.

Regional organizations should be involved in every stage of peacekeeping, from preventive diplomacy to troop deployment and peacebuilding activities in a broad sense, from disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to security sector reform and consolidation of rule of law. This is because they are the main stakeholders in their respective geographic areas. Regional organizations, as Ambassador Khalilzad has already said, actually know local realities better and have direct interests in the solution of crises that risk having negative repercussions on the region. Here, I would like to highlight the point I have already made, that regional organizations should be involved from the beginning of the process — not just arrive when things have already been prejudged, in a sense.

While the United Nations continues to bear the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the multiform and interconnected nature of threats and challenges requires that the international community take a global, collective and multilateral approach. The new missions, which often combine more and more civilian and military dimensions, involve complex tasks. The Chad operation is just one example of how these multidimensional operations now constitute the new pattern for new needs. Activities range from peacekeeping to monitoring the implementation of peace processes, military consultants and assistants, police work, monitoring the borders, the rule of law and the defence of human rights. An effective response thus assumes action in which all the international subjects, starting with the regional and subregional organizations, are as united and coordinated as possible and able to offer added value.

Italy, which promoted the European security strategy during its 2003 EU presidency, looks with favour on the strengthening of cooperation between the EU and the United Nations based on the joint declaration of June 2007, which follows on and updates the one adopted under the Italian presidency in September 2003. The operations that the EU conducted in the Balkans under a Security Council mandate and its experience with the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been useful testing grounds.

It is time to focus on the implementation of these strategic decisions. The mission in the Central African Republic and in Chad is a new example of the way the EU assumed the responsibility towards the United Nations and enhances a strong and focused cooperation with the African Union. We are working along these lines to strengthen coordination mechanisms between EU member States on the Security Council to undertake more effective action by the EU.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a body that brings together, in country-specific meetings, all the significant actors in a specific country, including the regional and subregional organizations. The Peacebuilding Commission therefore represents a model for interaction between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations, whose potential has to be exploited to the maximum for the promotion of integrated peacebuilding strategies. There are enormous potentialities in that regard that we must not miss.

Finally, we attribute particular relevance to capacity-building in regional and subregional organizations, especially in the area of homogenous standards, respect for shared principles and lessons learned from the most recent peacekeeping experiences. In that context, ways to assist regional organizations should be explored that do not necessarily provide for the use of troops, such as greater assistance in the areas of logistics, intervention planning and training.

With regard to training in particular, Italy contributes, through structures of the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units, to strengthening the capacities of the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the police component of peace operations.

What I mean to say is, that if we enhance the role of regional and subregional organizations, we have to focus at the same time on building the capacity of those regional and subregional organizations. Otherwise, this is just a rhetorical exercise.

Mr. Al-Qahtani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Mr. Minister, I have the pleasure to welcome you to New York. I am also pleased to see you presiding over the Council. We wish your delegation every success in its presidency of the Council for this month. I should also like to thank you for choosing the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security as the theme of our open debate today. That was an especially timely choice given that the role of regional and subregional organizations is being marginalized and belittled.

The diversity of the political, cultural, economic and social characteristics of the world's regions necessitates that we attach priority and give special importance to the regional perspective in addressing crises. Such a regional perspective is provided by the numerous regional and subregional organizations that exist throughout the world. Conscious of that fact, the authors of the Charter of the United Nations devoted Chapter VIII to the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. That constitutes the basis for a collective security system. The regional perspective contributes to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in the role of international organizations. Recently, however, that role has somehow been imperilled.

Some members of the Security Council have realized that danger and have called for the convening of several open meetings on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Resolution 1631 (2005) and numerous presidential statements have also been adopted to underscore the importance of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and of making use of them for the purposes of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Today's meeting comes at a time when there are suspicions regarding the Security Council's desire to promote partnerships with regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Despite all the meetings that have been held and the passage of 60 years since the inception of the collective security system, we must again recall that the Charter reserved a principal role for regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Charter also called for recourse to regional organizations in containing disputes and resolving conflicts under Chapter VIII. Indeed, the Charter gives priority to regional organizations in settling regional disputes.

In order to preserve intact the collective system of international security, the Security Council must cooperate with regional arrangements in a concrete manner. At a time when the role of some regional organizations is being marginalized or ignored completely, the Council must avoid selectivity and double standards in dealing with regional and subregional issues. Yet, history and reality do not make us optimistic that there is a genuine partnership between the Security Council and regional organizations in every case.

We need to preview this situation and must take a firm stand to collectively achieve our lofty goal of maintaining international peace and security. Moreover, in order to re-energize the Security Council's open debates on this matter, it is our hope that future Council resolutions that refer to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will be adopted under Chapter VIII of the Charter. Regional organizations must be given priority in resolving regional conflicts. They must have logistical, political and financial support as an explicit acknowledgement of the existence of a genuine partnership with those organizations, not merely a partnership of ideas that are irrelevant or unrealistic.

In addition to cooperating with the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations of which my country is a member — including the League of Arab States and the Gulf Cooperation Council — are trying to prevent conflict and to settle disputes by peaceful means. The Security Council, for example, has not given the necessary attention to initiatives by those regional organizations vis-à-vis the question of Palestine and resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. Some members of the Council have even belittled the importance of Arab initiatives in that regard. That illustrates the selectivity that exists with respect to the role of regional organizations.

Attention has recently been focused on cooperation between regional organizations and United Nations organs, especially the General Assembly, which has granted observer status to a number of regional and subregional organizations by virtue of their role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. In that regard, I should like to refer to draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.7, which is before the Assembly's Sixth Committee and which would grant observer status to the Gulf Cooperation Council, which cooperates with international organizations and plays a regional role in preventing and resolving regional and international disputes. A very important summit to discuss vital issues regarding international peace and security will be held at Doha in December.

Vicious political campaigns have been waged last year and this year against enhancing the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Those campaigns did not spare the African Union (AU), despite the memorandum of understanding signed at the beginning of this year between the AU and the United Nations on their 10-year partnership. Political reasons stood in the way of providing logistical and financial support for the AU missions in Darfur, Sudan, and in Somalia. That has hampered the role of that regional organization, and does not contribute to resolving crises and achieving stability in those two countries. What we have seen in Somalia is an example of the failure of the international Organization to promote partnership and collective security with relevant regional organizations in order to maintain international peace and security.

In conclusion, we would like to express our support for the draft presidential statement put forth by the delegation of Indonesia, which is to be adopted at the end of this meeting once our suggestions have been taken into consideration.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): We would like first to express our appreciation to you, Sir, for participating and presiding over this meeting today. We also welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at this meeting.

We welcome this opportunity to once again deliberate the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We commend Indonesia for presenting us with another opportunity to further discuss this issue, which is becoming increasingly central to our collective efforts to maintain international peace and security.

Over the past few years, the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security has become increasingly prominent, representing, in our view, a fuller articulation of the provisions of the Charter. Experience has shown that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations can enhance the maintenance of international peace and security. However, that active role of regional organizations should not be perceived as absolving the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, of its Charter-mandated responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, we reiterate our belief that we should coordinate our collective security efforts through the United Nations.

Regional organizations bring advantages to the maintenance of international peace and security, including through their proximity and an informed understanding of specific conflict situations. Those organizations have greater flexibility to intervene, especially during the initial stages of conflict, and can also be involved in mediation efforts when conflicts arise.

The African Union has intervened in some situations in which the United Nations has been unable to intervene, as well as in situations in which rapid interventions by the United Nations have been necessary but not possible. In some cases, the United Nations processes take a long time to finalize at a time when security situations on the ground are deteriorating. In such situations, regional organizations can mitigate those shortcomings on the part of the United Nations through rapid response and intervention.

The African Union has developed mechanisms to seek durable peace and sustainable development on the African continent. The African Peace and Security Architecture, launched in 2002, includes mechanisms such as the Peace and Security Council, a Continental Early Warning System, a Panel of the Wise, an African Stand-by Force and a Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Framework. Those mechanisms articulate a wide range of underpinning norms and values, all aimed at engaging in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. It should be noted that the protocol that established the African Peace and Security Council also specifically stipulates that

> "in the fulfilment of its mandate in the promotion and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa, the Peace and Security Council shall cooperate and work closely with the United Nations Security Council".

At the subregional level, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) continues to play a critical role in ensuring subregional stability. In that context, its Organ on Politics, Defence and Security has undertaken mediation efforts in quelling potential conflicts. SADC has also recently launched the SADC Brigade consisting of military, police and civilian components from all SADC member States, which will form part of the African Union Stand-by Force for rapid deployment should the need arise.

The scope for regional peace operations is limited by the lack of funds and logistical capabilities. Fundamentally, the lack of predictable, sustainable sources of funding often hamper well-conceived and well-timed peacekeeping initiatives, with disastrous implications for the communities affected by conflict. It is for this reason that the African Union has requested the United Nations to explore the possibility of funding, even through assessed contributions, peacekeeping operations that have been deployed with the consent of the United Nations. It is imperative that, as we further define the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, we be bold and ambitious in further exploring viable approaches to the question of cost-burden sharing. After all, peace and security in Africa are an integral part of global peace and security. Both the causes and consequences of conflict and instability in Africa have a significant linkage with global developments and relations in the international arena.

The recent adoption of resolution 1769 (2007) by the Security Council, deploying the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), gives practical expression to the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations, which we hope will go a long way in providing a strong basis for strengthened cooperation between the two organizations. UNAMID represents one of the innovative models of cooperation whereby the African Union and the United Nations can collaborate politically, logistically and financially to resolve one of the intractable conflicts of our time.

My delegation looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General, as requested by the Security Council in document S/PRST/2007/7, which we hope will include clear proposals on enhancing the relationship with regional organizations, including exploring ways on cost-burden sharing for maintaining international peace and security. Without such clear proposals, the report will not succeed in further advancing the debate beyond the scope of mere rhetoric. What is required are practical steps and concrete proposals on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our belief that closer cooperation with regional organizations strengthens the implementation of Security Council decisions by widening the collaborative effort of all interested parties in achieving a desired outcome. It is for that reason that we are pleased to be discussing ways and means of enhancing the role of regions in support of the Security Council. Our discussions here will serve as a useful resource on which we could build as we try to find solutions.

Lastly, we support the issuance of the presidential statement prepared by the delegation of Indonesia.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks you, Sir, for taking the felicitous initiative of convening this public debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General and thank him for his valuable contribution to the consideration of this important issue, as well as for all his initiatives to strengthen the Organization's capacities.

Over the past two years, our experience as a non-permanent member of the Council has made us witness to countless situations resulting in death, injury and other atrocities as the consequences of civil wars and acts of terrorism through the devastating effects of small arms and light weapons, of which Africa is most certainly the principal victim.

The Council's actions with respect to such scourges, while considerable in many ways, have needed to be significantly and sustainably perfected. In that regard, the visionary thinking of the founding fathers of our Organization is evident in their inclusion of Chapter VIII in the Charter, defining the mechanisms and identifying the necessary means for interaction between the Security Council and regional and subregional actors. That most certainly demonstrates the relevance of their vision, which is even more vibrant today.

There is no denying that the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security today represents genuine progress and that the opportunities for cooperation and interaction between the Council and those organizations have become more diverse in response to the need for a multidisciplinary approach to addressing crisis situations, as described in the Millennium Declaration. Regional arrangements in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security have now become an integral part of collective security, as proclaimed in the presidential statement of 28 March 2007, contained in document S/PRST/2007/7.

However, those regional and subregional organizations require the necessary capacity and wherewithal to act. I refer here to the human, logistical, financial and technical support that they often lack. Indeed, the essential question today, particularly in Africa, is whether or not the regional and/or subregional organizations, acting on behalf of the major organ of international peacekeeping, enjoy sufficient support from the international community. If so, how did it happen that the soldiers of the African Union were on the front lines in Darfur without the appropriate means to act in such a mission? Unfortunately, the indispensable support that Africa needed in that case — and that it still needs — has still not been received and has not been perceived by everyone as imperative. The situation regarding the mission in Somalia is proof of that.

Additionally, for my delegation, the tragedy in Haskanita, where African soldiers serving the cause of peace were attacked in a cowardly fashion, killed and humiliated, did not evoke a timely and appropriate reaction from the Security Council. That shows a certain lack of rationality in some of the reactions of the Council. From our viewpoint, those are bad practices, which must be eliminated.

How can the international community fail to note that Africa is, in spite of the difficulties of the current times, in the process of building up its regional capacities, thus contributing further to improving the situation on the continent? The African Union is taking Africa's destiny in hand despite a lack of resources. This is, we emphasize, an invaluable contribution to the entire international community in terms of the maintenance of international peace and security. In that respect, the fact that standing brigades are being gradually installed in five regions and will be operational by 2010 should be welcomed for the support it will bring, over the next few years, to the international community.

The case of Africa, which my delegation has chosen in order to illustrate its comments, because it is the largest test bed for cooperation between the Council and regional and subregional organizations, shows that the levels of intervention are both varied and complementary in military and diplomatic terms. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, as we all know, the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have been decisive in putting an end to situations of prolonged conflict.

Central Africa, my own region, has not been left out of the initiatives concerning conflict situations in various member countries. In that context, a number of countries in Central Africa have formed a military contingent to stabilize the situation in the Central African Republic, with the logistical support of France, whom we would like to thank. We appreciate the constructive role played by the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in getting the Government of the Sudan to consent to the necessary transition from the African Union mission in Darfur to a United Nations operation.

We also note the complementary and very professional efforts on the part of Mr. Jan Eliasson and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, respectively, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and the Special Envoy of the Chairman of the African Union Commission, during the difficult negotiations between the rebel groups in Darfur and the Government of the Sudan to reach a political solution to the crisis.

We also know that African organizations are not the only ones to intervene in that area. The European Union, through its efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and on the border between Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan, has also shown that they are very interested in Africa. That has allowed us to understand how effective such expanded partnerships are in that context, as well as in other areas, such as Afghanistan, with the European Union police missions. We consider those efforts to be best practices that should be made known to others.

Congo has always pled for strengthened partnerships between the United Nations and the

African Union, so that the decisions of the Security Council, for example, might take into account the concerns of African countries and be therefore legitimate and applicable. We welcome in that context the establishment of the hybrid operation in Darfur.

Congo has also always believed in the need for an ongoing dialogue between the Security Council, on the one hand, and the African Union, on the other hand, through its Peace and Security Council. That dialogue should involve the States in conflict and other States in the subregion, because some conflicts, owing to their complexity and ramifications, go beyond national and subregional boundaries. That is the case in the conflicts in Darfur, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We welcome the fact that that dialogue allowed us to sign, on 16 November 2006, a memorandum of understanding between the Security Council and the African Union, which further formalizes the mechanisms for cooperation between the two bodies.

Among existing mechanisms in Africa to be included in the museum of good practices, I would like to emphasize a subregional organization established in 1999 by the Economic Community of Central African States, under the auspices of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, namely, the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa. Its activities, which have been continuously reviewed, have made a significant contribution to improving inter-State relations and the climate of peace and security in the African subregion. The 26th ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, held in Yaoundé on 7 September 2007, led to a series of recommendations, including the pursuit of regional cooperation for the maintenance of peace and the holding of a ministerial conference on questions of cross-border security. That recommendation led to the adoption of a statement of political commitment by States in the subregion on establishing organizational, administrative, legal and technical mechanisms for cooperation in border zones in order to deal with phenomena such as uncontrolled or forced movements of populations, criminal activities by armed groups, the illegal circulation of small arms and light weapons and the exploitation of natural resources. We would note here the very important role played by the Advisory Committee in Central Africa and how useful its multifaceted support is to our States. That momentum should, therefore, be maintained.

Conflict prevention and resolution, the search for peace and peacebuilding have rightly become nearly permanent quests, especially in Africa. Indeed, the task of restoring peace and rebuilding capacities for development has always been at the centre of our concerns.

In that regard, the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission in Burundi and Sierra Leone, with the tremendous level of interest and commitment to it expressed by the international community, deserves to be welcomed. As we know, even the most developed peace agreements do not eliminate the causes of conflict. We need not only to implement them, but also to assist in the resumption of dialogue, confidence-building, respect for the law and economic recovery, which are the sine qua non conditions for maintaining the often fragile balance in developing countries. Here too, the contribution of the regional and subregional organizations is very important.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to note that regional organizations should, in conformity with Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, submit periodic reports to the Security Council on the relevant activities they have carried out. That would be the best way to share experiences on best practices and to commit the Council to periodic assessments in order to better develop its plans of action in the short, medium and long term.

Finally, my delegation fully supports the draft Presidential Statement prepared by the delegation of Indonesia.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by welcoming you, Sir, to this Chamber today and to congratulate you on the initiative of placing this very important subject on the agenda of the Council.

Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations establishes parameters for the distribution of work, responsibilities and duties shared by this universal Organization and regional arrangements and entities. It requires that their work be consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter. That legal framework has assumed particular importance since the carrying out of joint activities between international, regional and subregional organizations was incorporated into the mandate of the Security Council. Resolution 1631 (2005) reflected that development and provided us with a useful inventory for extending and strengthening the areas of cooperation that are evident in our discussions and decisions on the issues on the agenda of the Council.

In addition to their advantageous position with respect to the prevention and resolution of conflicts, regional and subregional organizations have also been participating in peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, they are currently being called upon to take part in institutional and material reconstruction efforts. They are able to do this, because they know well the structural problems that lie at the heart of conflicts, and they have an overall view of the internal and regional problems that bring together aspects of security, development and human rights.

In many cases, these capacities can be strengthened, thanks to horizontal and vertical cooperation. But this cooperation must be adapted on a case-by-case basis to each specific organization, and in particular must be adapted to each region, within the framework of the United Nations Charter. This is why we need to deepen further the contacts between the United Nations and these regional organizations at the institutional level, as well as on the ground.

We have to recognize that this interaction is not without problem areas; sometimes this arises from the constitutive agreements of the regional organizations or their degree of institutional strength; but in other cases this arises because of a lack of political will on the part of the actors or because of their relative lack of weight in the relevant organization. That explains why this specific experience of collaboration in the field is rather mixed; there are some positive cases and some not quite so positive.

I would now like to refer to three areas in which the Council has been active — namely, peacekeeping operations, institutional strengthening and peacebuilding. The primary responsibility to act rapidly and effectively in the areas of peace and security is the duty of the Security Council. On that basis, it is important to mobilize cooperation with regional organizations and to ensure that we are able to deploy rapidly with adequate logistics and troops. In these kinds of cases, and to be effective, we must take into account the disparate capacities, both military and financial, that the forces of the regional organizations may have available. And we should check that the operations that require United Nations funding be in line with the patterns and criteria established in the Charter for the maintenance of peace and security.

On the other hand, with regard to the mandates of many of these peacekeeping operations, support is included for the holding of elections, for the channelling of political dialogue and for the reconstruction of democratic institutions in post-conflict situations. It is these aspects that help to guarantee the stability of a country or a Government. International or subregional organizations are, therefore, called upon to complement the efforts of the international community, including by early warning systems, in order to dissipate tensions and to prevent or slow down the violation of human rights.

Together with the strengthening of the political institutions, there are also the economic and social needs that have to be dealt with in order to consolidate peace. The regional and subregional organizations must continue to make their contribution to bringing about an international environment that will strengthen stability, support development projects, facilitate trade and promote private investment. As part of this reconstruction effort, multinational companies should also be included, grouped together, for example, in the Global Compact.

In conclusion, we feel that there is a broad and promising area that can be developed further here, so that the regional and subregional mechanisms can cooperate and accompany multilateral action at the global level to strengthen the principles and purposes of the United Nations, paying attention to the specificities of each region and maintaining the framework of subsidiarity and complementarity established in the United Nations Charter.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): Mr. President, it is an honour having you chair our meeting today. Thank you for doing so. And you have chosen a topical issue. Although the Charter recognized from the outset the role of regional organizations, they have never been as active and important as they are today. I would like to highlight just a few examples and challenges.

We have seen the contribution that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made to focusing international attention on Burma, not least the support ASEAN is giving to the efforts of the Secretary-General, whose presence is also extremely welcome here today, and Professor Gambari. My

Government hopes the ASEAN Summit later this month will send a strong further message about the need for change in Burma.

In Africa, the expanding role of the African Union (AU) has been one of the most important developments of recent years. The Security Council mission to Addis Ababa this summer resulted in a joint declaration, committing this Council and the African Union's Peace and Security Council to intensify their cooperation across the conflict spectrum. As part of this, we should explore more sustained United Nations support for the African Union, including in capacity-building. We look forward to the forthcoming report from the Secretary-General.

In Darfur, this partnership faces a critical test, as the AU-United Nations hybrid force takes over from the purely AU force. The experience to come in Darfur is bound to provide lessons for both organizations. Our priority now must be the effective deployment of the hybrid force. My Government supports the AU-United Nations proposed composition of this force, and we look to the Government of the Sudan to accept it without reservations.

Darfur is also a diplomatic partnership between the African Union and the United Nations. Salim Salim and Jan Eliasson are working to build a sustainable peace, supported by a joint mediation team. They need all our support in what will be a difficult and lengthy process.

In the Middle East, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Gulf Cooperation Council play valuable roles in promoting cooperation and political progress.

Across Africa, we have seen regional and subregional organizations playing an important role in conflict resolution, for example the Economic Community of West African States in the Ivory Coast. My Government hopes that such efforts could also succeed in Zimbabwe. The South African Government and the Southern African Development Community have been engaged to seek to resolve the crisis there. We would support any process to improve the plight of the people in Zimbabwe, where human rights abuses, appalling standards of government, brutal intimidation and economic collapse have turned a once rich nation into one of the most desperate places on Earth.

Our principal organization in Europe, the European Union (EU), has developed new capabilities in foreign policy and defence over the last 10 years. I associate myself with the statement to be made later in this debate by Portugal on behalf of the EU. In Africa, but also in the Balkans, the Middle East and Asia, the EU is active in military and civilian stabilization efforts. The EU is directly engaged in building up the rule of law in Iraq, providing police support and training in Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, developing Palestinian Security Forces and providing the peacekeeping force in Bosnia.

On Bosnia, we look forward to hearing from the High Representative on 15 November. We support the steps he has taken to ensure the continued viability of the Dayton Agreement. The European Union also stands ready to take on its responsibilities in Kosovo, working alongside NATO, once the status process is concluded next month.

NATO, of course, is our second regional organization, a transatlantic alliance designed to defend the West during the cold war, and now transformed so it can project stability and security beyond our region. NATO bears the brunt of the security effort in Afghanistan. It has stabilized the Balkans after the tumultuous 1990s. And it stands ready, as the most militarily capable multinational organization, to consider further demanding security tasks.

EU military operations in the Balkans have been conducted in partnership with NATO, and both the European Union and NATO work closely with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, another valuable organization in our conflict resolution toolbox. NATO, the EU and the United Nations are also working together in Afghanistan. In such cases, an array of international involvement can be needed. Different actors can bring different assets. But it is crucial that coordination of the international effort is effective, and the United Nations often has the central role to play there.

May I just say, on Afghanistan, that we are appalled by today's suicide bombing in New Baghlan, which seems to have killed up to 100 people, including five members of the Afghan Parliament. Actions such as this are inhuman. We utterly condemn those responsible and those who supplied the materials for this act of terrorism.

Around the world, the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations are partners for peace, as the statement we will adopt later today makes clear. The challenges are more complex than ever, but the opportunities for progress are also there. That should be our focus and our common goal.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): On behalf of the Chinese delegation, Sir, I wish to extend our warm welcome to you and to thank you for coming all the way to New York to preside over this important open debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his important statement. I also welcome the representatives of regional and subregional organizations.

The world is now undergoing complex and profound changes. Member States are confronted not only by traditional security issues such as territorial disputes and armed conflicts, but also by non-traditional security challenges such as terrorism, a prevalence of drugs, the spread of diseases and climate change. No country or international organization can do the job alone in addressing those cross-border and even transregional challenges. It is therefore imperative to promote multilateralism and to give full play to and strengthen the consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

In recent years, regional and subregional organizations have made increasingly remarkable contributions to preventing and resolving conflicts, promoting post-conflict reconstruction, combating terrorism and defusing humanitarian crises. China firmly supports the United Nations in intensifying cooperation with regional and subregional organizations so as to maintain international as well as regional peace and security.

In that connection, I wish to make the following four points. First, in order to give play to the role of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, the Charter of the United Nations should continue to serve as guidance. According to the United Nations Charter, the Security Council shoulders primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and is the core of the collective international security mechanism. Regional organizations can take mandatory actions only with the authorization of the Security Council. Chapter VIII of the Charter points out that the Security Council should encourage the development of the pacific settlement of local disputes by regional agencies. China believes that this should continue to serve as the basis for supporting the role of regional or subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security.

Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen communication and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. All critical issues have complicated causes and are hard to resolve. Solutions often emerge during the interactions between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. The outcome document of the 2005 World Summit contains recognition of the contributions made by regional organizations to international peace and security and support for a closer link between the United Nations and regional organizations on the basis of the United Nations Charter.

In November 2006, the United Nations and the African Union (AU) signed a declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation, opening a new channel for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We hope such cooperation will be further strengthened, particularly in identified areas. Thirdly, the United Nations should continue to provide assistance to regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union, to strengthen their capacity-building.

African issues dominate the Security Council's agenda. The African Union and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community have made arduous efforts to address local conflicts and facilitate post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. Owing to constraints on resources, however, they were not able to give full scope to their unique strengths in resolving their issues. Through its resolution 1769 (2007) adopted in July, the Security Council decided to launch the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, Sudan. The peacekeeping operation will be deployed jointly by the United Nations and the African Union, but the main resources will be provided by the United Nations. That initiated a new model through which the United Nations could strengthen the capacity-building of the African Union. That model deserves to be examined comprehensively and could be used to settle conflicts in other parts of the world.

Fourthly, regional and subregional organizations should be encouraged to play a bigger role. It has been proven that, thanks to geographical, cultural and other advantages, regional and subregional organizations can play a unique and even irreplaceable role in resolving local conflicts. With regard to issues on its agenda, the Security Council should, of course, work vigorously to address them but should also encourage constructive help with those issues from regional and subregional organizations. As to issues that do not pose a threat to international peace and security, it is all the more important to fully mobilize the initiative of regional and subregional organizations towards strengthening communication and coordination with those countries that are concerned with bringing about solutions at the regional level.

As one of the most important regional mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made unremitting efforts to maintain regional peace and security. The ASEAN+3 cooperation between ASEAN and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea is playing an increasingly important role in promoting regional peace and security. China firmly supports ASEAN in playing a leading role in the settlement of critical issues in the region and is ready to do its utmost to support and coordinate with ASEAN in that regard.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has emerged as an important platform for promoting regional security, stability and development. China supports its active role in combating terrorism and maintaining regional stability. The building of a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity requires the concerted efforts of the international community. My delegation is convinced that regional and subregional organizations, as an important component of the international community, will play an even bigger role in maintaining international peace and security in the future.

In conclusion, China wishes to thank the Indonesian delegation for drawing up the Presidential Statement. China supports the adoption of the statement by the Security Council.

Mr. Bartho (Slovakia): On behalf of the Slovak delegation I would also like to congratulate the Indonesian presidency of the Council for the articulated concept paper and also for the well prepared Presidential Statement, which harmoniously elaborates on this important topic, which was so notably developed by the unanimous adoption of Council resolution 1631 (2005) during Romania's Council presidency in October 2005, was further explored by the Greek presidency in September 2006 and was elaborated later in the context of conflict resolution in Africa and Europe, where regional organizations play an important role.

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered later on by Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

It goes without saying that no two regional or intergovernmental organizations are the same. It is, therefore, necessary to identify areas where possible cooperation with the appropriate organizations could be effectively enhanced and implemented. Calls for the establishment of mechanisms that would allow regional and intergovernmental organizations to present their key findings from their peacebuilding or post-conflict missions, thus involving them proactively in dealing with collective responses to the peace and security challenges of today, are not new. The creation of such mechanisms would provide a flexible, effective and regular flow of up-to-date information between the United Nations and the regional organizations, which would certainly contribute to more complimentary and coordinated actions on both sides and exclude duplicated actions and efforts. Such cooperation, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, should be intensified both at the high level and at the expert level. The goal should be to establish efficient partnerships and an equitable division of labour that reflects the comparative advantage of each organization involved in conflict prevention and peacekeeping. Slovakia welcomes the personal involvement of the Secretary-General in this respect, and we look forward to his report with recommendations pursuant to the presidential statement of 28 March 2007 (S/PRST/2007/7).

Like others, Slovakia acknowledges the primary responsibility of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. At the same time, there are many advantages to choosing regional and subregional organizations in the prevention or resolution of conflict, such as local ownership, leverage over parties or deeper understanding of the region concerned, which has been proven in particular in Africa. Therefore, Slovakia fully supports additional close and operational cooperation between the United

Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the field of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Here, we would like to commend the African Union and subregional organizations such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Southern African Development Community for their role in numerous peace initiatives and in the peaceful settlement of disputes in Africa.

As a member of the European Union (EU), we would also like to praise the positive developments with regard to the triangular cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union. We look forward in particular to the EU's contribution to addressing the regional dimension of the Darfur crisis by deploying a bridging military operation in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy.

We welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 1769 (2007), which moves the partnership and cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union to a new, unprecedented level. Deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur will undoubtedly strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union for years to come. We would like to stress that the success of this particular cooperative effort will be crucial in bringing hope to the people of Darfur and contributing to a lasting solution to the Darfur conflict. Slovakia underlines the need to further intensify the efforts of all stakeholders in order to ensure deployment of an effective hybrid operation on the ground as soon as possible.

As we have said on previous occasions, we fully share the call for a pragmatic and action-oriented approach towards cooperation, regardless of the agenda item concerned. Based on our direct experience from chairing the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), I would like to say few words about its work in the context of this thematic debate. Council members will recall that in February 2007 we discussed ways to enhance the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by affirming the Council's determination to promote increased multilateral cooperation, particularly with international intergovernmental organizations. In this context, the 1540 Committee has undertaken a range of outreach activities with regional and international intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Customs Organization. All of those organizations play crucial roles in the implementation process, especially through their guidelines, practical experience and lessons learned in the areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004) and through their assistance programmes to facilitate the implementation of that resolution.

The activities undertaken to date demonstrate the growing cooperation and interaction between the 1540 Committee and those organizations in pursuing the common goal of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is also acknowledged that the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by all States is a long-term process that will require continuous efforts at the national, regional and international levels, including enhancing capacity-building and assistance by States and other members of the international community. To that end, the Committee places special emphasis on promoting opportunities for international cooperation and assistance with all regional and subregional organizations that have experience and resources in any area covered by the resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006).

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First and foremost, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to organize this debate and for having travelled from Jakarta to New York to preside.

Better defining the respective roles of regional and subregional organizations and of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security is a major challenge.

As a member of the European Union, I make reference to the statement to be delivered later by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the presidency of the Union.

In resolution 1631 (2005), the Security Council stressed the importance of closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations at all stages in the management of a crisis. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General has presented recommendations (S/2006/590) that are particularly relevant; a number of those should be considered with a view to their implementation in specific regional contexts.

Basic conditions for effective cooperation are knowledge of respective capacities and the creation of rapid communication channels. Meetings like today's are useful, first and foremost, in enabling regional and subregional organizations to explain their activities and their expectations.

But knowledge of respective capacities can best be acquired through regular relations between secretariats. For this reason, my country favours strengthening such relations where they have not yet been sufficiently developed. The same can be said for meetings and exchanges between high-level officials. Through such relations between secretariats and high-level meetings, we can have a fruitful exchange of experiences, on both a technical and a geopolitical level. Meetings of political bodies supplement this groundwork, as can be seen by the visit of the Security Council to the headquarters of the African Union, and its 16 June meeting in Addis Ababa with the African Union Peace and Security Council.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security embraces the whole gamut of areas of action, from conflict prevention to peacebuilding. The ongoing exercise within the United Nations Department of Political Affairs aimed at strengthening prevention and mediation capacities must be accompanied by a discussion on how to make greater use of the prevention and mediation capacities of regional and subregional organizations and how to avoid duplication of efforts.

As far as peacekeeping operations are concerned, great progress has been made in cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union, between the United Nations and the African Union and among the three organizations. Strengthening the capacities of regional and subregional organizations is essential and efforts to that end must, if necessary, be assisted by the United Nations or other organizations. Moreover, since every peacekeeping operation has its own particular characteristics, the main challenge is to adapt cooperation to the capacities involved, taking scrupulous care to achieve the highest standards and a clear chain of command. In that connection, we believe that the structure of the hybrid force decided upon in the context of the Darfur crisis should not necessarily lead to a generally applicable model.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in peacebuilding is undeniable. The Peacebuilding Commission offers an ideal framework for consultation among all relevant actors, and it is important to ensure the greatest possible involvement by regional organizations in such work.

Belgium is aware of the dangers inherent in all processes aimed at the institutionalization of relationships. That is why we believe it is more important to create pragmatic and flexible synergies than to establish theoretical frameworks, which very often prove to be rigid and not very functional.

Nevertheless, it remains true that many actors and instruments are involved in the very broad area of maintaining international peace and security. Therefore, it is essential to structure cooperation according to need. The practice of joint statements, used by the European Union and the United Nations in 2003 and, most recently, in June 2007, is an instrument enabling us to be flexible in defining subjects for discussion, to specify certain modalities and to determine certain cooperation mechanisms. However, such exercises should not cause us to make cooperation conform to rigid and prescriptive criteria.

Belgium believes that a practical approach, favouring practice over theory and taking particular account of lessons learned from ongoing operations, can serve as a framework for continuing to strengthen and refine the relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

Mr. Shcherbak (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Our delegation is pleased to welcome you, Mr. Foreign Minister, to the presidency of the Security Council. Your presence in this Chamber, along with the participation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and representatives of a broad spectrum of leading regional organizations in this meeting, are convincing proof of the importance of today's topic.

We agree with the Secretary-General and previous speakers that, while cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations has increased to a truly unprecedented level, additional efforts could be made to further intensify it. In our view, the threats and challenges now facing us can be overcome only through a comprehensive and collective approach and in strict compliance with the Charter of the United Nations.

An important element in further efforts to increase the effectiveness of our world Organization, as the central multilateral institution responsible for maintaining international peace and security, is the continued growth of practical cooperation and coordination between the United Nations, including the Security Council, and regional and other intergovernmental organizations. Such interaction, as clearly stipulated in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), must continue to be based on the solid foundation of the Charter, in particular its Chapter VIII, and on the need for careful observance of the basic principles and criteria of international peacekeeping at all stages of conflict prevention and settlement and post-conflict peacebuilding.

That involves, first and foremost, the indisputably important responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. Ideally, all regional or coalition peacekeeping operations should be authorized by and held accountable to the Council. That condition should become binding in cases in which the mandates of such operations include elements of enforcement measures.

There have been many positive experiences in the area of cooperation between the Council and its regional partners, which we have already discussed. Here, I am thinking in particular of the European Union, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of American States, the Caribbean Community and a number of other subregional organizations, including the League of Arab States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Obviously, the experience acquired in this area demonstrates the need to accord priority to political and diplomatic means of conflict prevention and settlement, with a key role to be played by Africans themselves. The peacekeeping efforts of the AU, ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD, as well as the mediation missions conducted by prominent African political leaders, in a broad range of situations, have made it possible to make important progress in strengthening regional stability.

The Russian Federation has consistently stated that the efforts of African organizations should be fully supported by the authority of the Security Council and by the logistical and technical capacities of the United Nations. Particularly timely, in that context, are the efforts made in Darfur by the African Union Mission in the Sudan and the preparations for deploying the hybrid peacekeeping force established pursuant to resolution 1769 (2007) in Darfur by the end of the year. Of course, it is important to have feedback. Here, I am referring in particular to the need to ensure that regional operations are effectively planned and executed and that they are held sufficiently accountable to the Security Council. That is particularly relevant in those cases in which the Council not only supports such operations, but also authorizes them through its decisions.

This year's follow-up visit to Africa by members of the Security Council and our comprehensive meetings with AU leaders have enabled us to discuss virtually the entire range of acute crisis situations on the continent, as well as issues related to the future development of the Council's practical cooperation with the African Union Peace and Security Council to resolve the most critical problems threatening peace and security in Africa. The Council's visit has established a mechanism for regular exchanges of views between the two organs regarding issues of mutual concern to them.

Peacekeepers from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are also making a substantial contribution to conflict settlement in the post-Soviet space. In particular, together with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, they are continuing to support security and stability in the area affected by the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. The Russian Federation intends to continue to vigorously promote long-term cooperation between the United Nations and the CIS, particularly in the area of peacekeeping.

In that context, the cooperation developing between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) — which has been working intensively to establish its own peacekeeping potential, including for use in United Nations peacekeeping operations — has great potential. The CSTO is also making a significant contribution to international efforts aimed at the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Under CSTO auspices, effective mechanisms have been at work for several years to combat the northern route of the drug trade from Afghanistan to Europe, and Operation Canal has been set up to establish a permanent counter-narcotics belt along Afghanistan's borders.

In ensuring stability and security in the Eurasian region, an important role is being played by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, whose members have expressed a desire to cooperate with the United Nations in a host of relevant areas, including, in particular, combating international terrorism and the illegal-drug trade and assisting in post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan. In that regard, we continue to endorse the recommendation, set out in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, that regional organizations with conflict prevention or peacekeeping capacities should consider making those capacities part of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System.

We are convinced that the coming together of regional partners and the United Nations will continue. On the one hand, we expect that regional and subregional organizations will more actively make their resources and comparative advantages available. On the other hand, the United Nations, including the Security Council, should consolidate coordination and interaction with these organizations, keeping in mind the principles of reasonable division of labour and respect for the prerogatives of the United Nations and its Security Council.

The collective efforts for rapid social and economic rehabilitation of countries emerging from crises is an integral part of the international strategy to secure peace and the non-renewal of conflict by establishing safeguards against renewal of conflicts. Here, a coordinating role should be played by the Peacebuilding Commission, whose agenda already includes Burundi and Sierra Leone.

We welcome the practice of holding regular high-level meetings between the Secretary-General and the leaders of the regional organizations on an increasingly broad and varied joint agenda. In addition to peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks, we have added countering the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the illegal flows of small arms and light weapons, settling other destabilizing transborder problems, combating drug trafficking and organized crime. In this context, it would be useful to have an official structuring of agreements between the respective secretariats of the United Nations and its regional partners.

In conclusion, we would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to the entire Indonesian delegation for preparing a good draft statement, which will be adopted today with our support.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): I would like to join preceding speakers in commending the Indonesian delegation for organizing this debate. I would also like to thank you, Sir, for your kind words at the beginning of the meeting regarding the Ghana delegation and me, in reference to the Ghanaian presidency of this Council.

The recurrence of today's theme in the Council's open debates is an acknowledgement of the increasing relevance of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. My delegation is optimistic that at the end of our deliberations, we will resolve to strengthen the cooperation between the various regional organizations and the United Nations, in particular the Security Council.

The growing importance of regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution is not merely the result of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. It is also the natural consequence of the failure sometimes of the international community to respond promptly and effectively to some conflict situations.

The relevance of regional or subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security cannot be overemphasized. Regional organizations often have in-depth knowledge about the root causes of conflicts in their respective regions. Those organizations may have better knowledge and understanding of the dynamics, as well as of the parties and personalities involved in a given conflict, and can therefore be indispensable sources of useful information, which will enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in the management of those conflicts.

Some regional bodies are more flexible in the allocation of resources, including troops, and are therefore able to deploy them, faster than the United Nations can. Furthermore, regional and subregional organizations can be very useful in launching peacebuilding activities in support of the United Nations and can facilitate post-conflict reconstruction. In addition, as the world continues to be confronted with both new and old threats to international peace and security, the demand for peacekeeping will continue to increase. With the United Nations having no standing army of its own, the regional and subregional organizations can be indispensable resource pools for tapping troops for peacekeeping operations.

Moreover, as the concept of international security has itself been broadened with the declaration of a global war against terrorism, local knowledge and expertise will be crucial in any antiterrorism operations. Addressing these and other emerging issues requires effective cooperation with the relevant regional or subregional bodies.

The broad strength of regional organizations vis-à-vis the United Nations has generally centred on the motivations of local actors to become involved in addressing conflicts and to maintain involvement even in the face of casualties. Some members of the Security Council are sometimes more inclined to seek regional solutions for operations where a conflict falls within a traditional sphere of influence or where major powers are reluctant to deploy their own forces. This may also be driven by concerns about the perceived difficulty and cost of mustering support within the wider international community and the legislative processes of the United Nations.

Reflecting these tendencies, regional peacekeeping capacity is undergoing considerable development, propelled by the interest of countries within and outside those regions. However, these developments should not be regarded as favouring the arguments for multilateral or regional peacekeeping operations as substitutes for or replacements of United Nations operations. They must be construed in the broader sense as part of the overall efforts to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations in order to share responsibilities, based on the comparative advantage of each, leading to complementarity and the avoidance of competition.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and it is in this context that effective cooperation must take place. Cooperation between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations is a shared responsibility. Members of the regional and subregional organizations should ensure respect for the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter or instruments establishing these organizations, especially in the areas of peace and security. In the case of Africa, for instance, the Constitutive Act of the African Union frowns upon the unconstitutional overthrow of Governments and enjoins its member States to ensure respect for rule of law and the democratic principles of governance.

While the regional and subregional organizations endeavour to address their peace and security challenges, the United Nations and the international community must support their efforts, keeping in mind that the Security Council still bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of the international peace and security. Indeed, more action is needed from the international community to tackle the wider global sources of armed conflict. The United Nations should support capacity-building and the training of personnel and should maintain a sustained engagement with these organizations.

To ensure the success and effectiveness of regional organizations, co-deployment sanctioned by the United Nations in an operation carried out by regional or subregional organizations should establish a clear framework that will include specifying objectives, careful delineation of the respective roles and responsibilities of the United Nations and those organizations. In the end, however, the involvement of regional organizations must not be seen as diluting the primary responsibility of the Security Council.

Finally, Ghana supports the adoption of the presidential statement prepared by the Indonesian delegation.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to congratulate you and your delegation, Mr. President, for the initiative to hold this debate. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence here and also the representatives of the various regional and subregional organizations that are with us here today.

Allow me also to reiterate what has been the unwavering position of my country, namely, that in this kind of debate, it is preferable and useful to hear the opinion of those people, countries and, in this case, regions that are affected by the debate, so that we, the members of the Security Council, can benefit from and enrich our presentations with their viewpoints.

Achieving peace is a complicated topic that involves many factors. One of these factors is giving form and content to the architecture of collective security, as set out in Chapter VIII of the Charter, and thereby to strengthen the regional and subregional synergies that the Charter offers. In this context, allow me to stress the initiative undertaken by the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) to hold its fifth special meeting in Nairobi last month, with the participation of a broad range of international, regional and subregional organizations. The joint statement endorsed at that meeting established a practical results-based framework which allows us to promote cooperation between the United Nations and this body.

Regional organizations are a natural mechanism for promoting, with local leadership, the aspirations of the international community. They are the ones that possess the most complete and direct knowledge of the roots of conflict in their geographic area. In this respect, we recognize the work of the Organization of the American States (OAS). The good offices of the OAS in peacekeeping in the region as well as its initiatives to alleviate social problems are a demonstration, I believe, of a dynamic expertise. In the case of Haiti, OAS participation as a regional counterpart has very much helped the United Nations in its work on the ground.

Day by day, the Security Council adapts a broader vision of its responsibilities with regard to the risks to peace and security. However, it still does not give the regional organizations sufficient logistical and financial support to enable them to be an effective first line of defence in conflict. The garnering of funds and the logistical planning for the joint mission with the United Nations is a very difficult task, and to demonstrate this point, we have the well-known example of the deployment of the hybrid force in Darfur. On the other hand, when the will is weak and the priorities of the international community are divided, coordination and funding are the first casualties. This is an unfortunate situation. We see this happening today in Somalia.

It is clear that we cannot overcome these problems unless we have formal mechanisms for financing coordinated actions and unless we have ongoing arrangements that can be adapted among secretariats to coordinate logistics and training. This point was mentioned by the representative of the Russian Federation. Two years after the Secretary-General's recommendations at the World Summit, our relations with regional organizations continue to be organized on an improvised basis where we deal with issues on a case-by-case basis, handling the challenges as they present themselves, without creating the formal structures that would help to strengthen action.

When inaction is not an option, we cannot simply improvise and assign responsibilities to an organization or ask it to bear costs. For this reason, it is important that the presidential statement we adopt stresses the importance of determining and developing modalities which will favour the contribution of regional and subregional organizations to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation too would like, first of all, to express our gratitude to the Indonesian delegation, to your country and to you, Sir, in particular, for having taken the initiative to organize this debate on a subject which is fundamentally important to the United Nations and the Security Council. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for having participated in our debate today.

The founders of the United Nations recognized, from the inception of the Charter, that there is a specific role for regional organizations in contributing to the peaceful settlement of disputes and to international cooperation. We simply need to look at the significant participation in today's debate to see how much these organizations have developed since 1945. There is no longer any corner of the world where the strengthening of regional solidarity has not become a principle objective and, often, a concrete reality.

This evolution is, for us, a challenge. It represents a great asset. Regional organizations bring to the table critical capabilities to help us deal with crises involving political and jurisdictional mechanisms, military police and help for reconstruction. There are two examples that come immediately to mind.

First of all is the European Union (EU) — and I would clarify here that France fully concurs with the statement to be made by Portugal on behalf of the EU. The EU has made an excellent contribution to international peace and security by stabilizing the European continent and by assisting in its prosperity.

Once it began to project its identity and peaceful ideals throughout the world, it cooperated closely with the United Nations. It supported the United Nations in Bosnia where it took up the police mission; in Kosovo, where it is getting ready to take over the police and judicial operations of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; in the Democratic Republic of the Congo where the EU brought in decisive military support to Ituri in 2003 to the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where it also significantly contributed to the organization of the elections and where it continues to strengthen international action for the reform of the security sector; and finally, in Sudan, particularly in Darfur, where the EU supports the African Union Mission in Sudan and will support the hybrid force. I would also like to mention the EU involvement in the Central African Republic and in Chad with the deployment of a European force, mandated by the United Nations, which will protect civilians and support a United Nations police mission there.

There is also the example of the African Union (AU). France directly, and through the EU, supports the strengthening of the capacities of this organization and its members so that they may participate more actively in stabilizing the African continent. I will not go on in length on items others have mentioned, but I would like to note how much the strengthening of the AU and its stronger cooperation with the United Nations has been very promising. I am particularly thinking here of the decision to establish the United Nations-African Union hybrid force in Darfur.

The Security Council, within its responsibilities, notes this rise in importance of the AU and notes, particularly, the participation of President Konaré in the 25 September Council summit on peace and security in Africa, a meeting that was chaired by the President of the French Republic.

I would also like to note and welcome the growing role played by the Association of South-East Asian Nations in the peaceful settlement of regional crises and, in particular, its commitment to a true, inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation in Burma.

The growth in the role of regional organizations also offers opportunities which we need to seize. I am thinking specifically of three areas where increased cooperation could be especially beneficial. First of all, in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) envisions an obligation to combat the risk of access to WMDs or related materials by non-State actors. Regional organizations can provide key support in this area to the committee established under Council resolution 1540 (2004). This is cooperation which needs to be greatly developed and one which we actively support.

Secondly, in combating terrorism, a solid and focused cooperation on results with international, regional and subregional organizations is vital to the implementation by States of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The same can be said for the sanctions against Al-Qaida and the Taliban. Cooperation with Interpol, in particular, is recognized in Security Council resolution 1699 (2006). Others have developed since then, especially regionally. A few days ago, the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) met in Nairobi for its fifth special meeting with international, regional and subregional organizations. We welcome the results of this meeting.

However, it is necessary to increase and broaden such partnerships. Today's events, and in particular the attack in the province of Baghlan in Afghanistan, which France resolutely condemns, once again illustrate, were there even a need to do so, the need to strengthen our collective efforts against terrorism by working with regional organizations.

In conclusion, I should like to refer to an area — the illicit trafficking in light weapons — where we think there is a need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Light weapons destabilize entire regions and are sometimes even used against United Nations forces. No effort should be spared to enable regional organizations to contribute to combating that trafficking.

Nevertheless, as Members of the United Nations, we should continue to be vigilant as we help regional organizations come of age. We represent a universal Organization. Despite all the regional specificities and local values, the Organization is founded on the rejection of relativism and on the promotion of the universal ideal of peace and cooperation. There is no area of the world where the United Nations is not involved — nor should there be. There are no customs that make a region incomprehensible or inaccessible to the United Nations. The United Nations is, and must continue to be, at the heart of the system of collective security. Regional organizations can support the United Nations, but they are no substitute for it.

This is first and foremost an issue of legitimacy, but it is also a matter of efficiency. There is therefore a need for special vigilance with regard to the use of our resources. Cooperation with regional organizations should not mean relegating the United Nations merely to providing ways and means to third parties without it being at the centre of control and the taking of decisions.

I should like to conclude by referring to the role of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission could serve as a point of convergence for all stakeholders emerging from regional conflicts. The participation of regional and subregional organizations is crucial. France very much looks forward to interacting with them.

Finally, I should like to express the support of the delegation of France for the draft presidential statement that has been prepared by Indonesia, which we will adopt shortly.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia.

I should like to preface my remarks by expressing deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his active participation in this debate and for the important insights he has shared.

Regional and subregional organizations have become an integral part of the global architecture. They are increasingly recognized for their role in the promotion of security and prosperity in their respective regions. Indonesia is a consistent and robust supporter of regional organizations. It is a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It has vigorously promoted interregional cooperation involving South-East Asia and the South-West Pacific, and between Asia and Africa. It has also strongly supported cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In that spirit, we have initiated this meeting of the Council.

The capability of regional and subregional organizations to promote international peace and security is yet to be fully realized. The wealth of their experience in this vital activity is yet to be tapped. In accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, modalities can be developed to enhance their contribution to international peace and security.

Indonesia's experience as a founding member of ASEAN attests to the importance of a regional organization to peace and security. On the basis of that experience, we offer the following observations.

First, a regional organization can fundamentally shift the dynamics of the region towards peace and security. It can build bridges of understanding, it can transform relations from enmity to amity and it can bring stability and prosperity where conflict and discord previously reigned.

When ASEAN was established, in 1967, a war was raging in South-East Asia, which was then an economic backwater. Trust and confidence among the five founding members were at a low point. With patience and perseverance and by taking a step-by-step building-block approach, ASEAN has grown to include 10 South-East Asian countries. For 40 years, ASEAN member countries have enjoyed peace and security. It has therefore enabled the region to focus on economic development, which in turn reinforces peace and security.

ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia serves as a code of conduct for relations among its members, and between ASEAN and acceding external States. Signatories and acceding States renounce the use of force and bind themselves to peacefully settling their disputes in the region. Indeed, ASEAN has been able to reinforce the norms of the Charter of the United Nations and conflict prevention efforts.

Our second observation is that a regional or subregional organization must adapt to new challenges, in order to remain relevant to the pursuit of international peace and security. In the face of the challenges of the downside of globalization and the new threats to human security, ASEAN is transforming itself from a rather loose association of States into an ASEAN community resting on three pillars: an ASEAN security community, an ASEAN economic community and an ASEAN socio-cultural community.

The attainment of the ASEAN security community will enhance ASEAN's capacity for conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding. It will entail political development based on the principles of democracy, human rights and good governance. ASEAN will thereby emerge as a community that goes beyond addressing economic and social issues and traditional security concerns. It will be deeply committed to human rights and democracy. The ASEAN charter is expected to be signed two weeks from now. Its adoption will make ASEAN a rules-based organization.

Thirdly, a regional organization can influence the dynamics for peace and prosperity well beyond its geographic borders. Since its inception, in 1967, while promoting internal integration, ASEAN has pursued an outward-looking strategy. It has been an open organization that continues to enhance cooperation beyond its geographical boundaries and with other regional organizations. It has therefore cultivated dialogue-partner relations with 10 countries and organizations.

It maintains its ASEAN+3 cooperation with China, Japan and South Korea — a process that links South-East Asia with North-East Asia.

It is the driving spirit behind the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which it established in 1994, and the only forum of dialogue and consultation on political and security issues, confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the larger Asia-Pacific region.

In 2005, ASEAN launched the East Asia Summit, bringing the countries of the ASEAN+3 process together with Australia, India and New Zealand. The Summit envisions the establishment of a new architecture for peace, security and prosperity in East Asia.

ASEAN has developed dialogues with Europe, through the Asia-Europe Meeting, and with Latin America, through the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation. ASEAN is thereby sharing with countries beyond its own region its norms and practices in the promotion of peace and security. Although ASEAN's membership does not formally include countries in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region, the activities of ASEAN cover those larger regions through its dialogue-partner mechanism.

Indonesia has been a great proponent of such ASEAN-driven efforts. Indeed, Indonesia has also promoted, and directly benefited from, intraregional cooperation.

In that connection, Indonesia wishes to pay tribute to the European Union and ASEAN for their contribution to our successful effort to restore peace and security in the province of Aceh during the years 2005 to 2007, in particular by providing a joint monitoring team to supervise the implementation of the Aceh peace agreement.

Indonesia is deeply committed to and involved in those intraregional and interregional activities. At the same time, we are also deeply committed to the principles, ideals and goals of the United Nations. Hence, we are totally convinced of the strategic need for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Through such cooperation, we can effectively address the global security challenges of our time. It is Indonesia's fervent hope that our discussions today will help attain that goal.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to my colleague His Excellency Mr. Alberto Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, and give him the floor.

Mr. Romulo (Philippines): The Philippines congratulates Indonesia and its Foreign Minister on its assumption of the presidency of the Council.

The changing face of our world highlights the indispensable role of regional and subregional organizations in our quest for peace and security. For the Philippines, the peace and security of the different regions of the world hold great importance in terms of our commitment to the basic principles of the Charter and because of our deep concern for our nationals. One tenth of our nationals are outside the country and live in practically every region of the world. It is thus in the Philippines' national interest that all regions remain peaceful, stable and progressive.

The Charter provides the basis for cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Working with the United Nations, regions must strengthen their potential to resolve disputes and maintain peace and security. Cooperative ventures between the United Nations and regional organizations in the field of peacekeeping, and enhanced interaction on conflict prevention and peacebuilding prove the importance and usefulness of that partnership. To further strengthen that critical partnership, may I respectfully propose the following.

First, the exchange of information on matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security at the regional level should serve as the backbone for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

Secondly, formal arrangements for collaboration should be concluded between the United Nations and regional organizations to establish clear areas of responsibility and more efficient cooperation. The Secretary-General's 2005 report "In larger freedom" recommended memorandums of understanding to govern such relationships. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed such a memorandum on 27 September 2007. It may also be recalled that ASEAN was granted observer status in the General Assembly on 4 December 2006.

Thirdly, cooperation between the United Nations and the concerned regional organization should be monitored. Monitoring should be seen as a nurturing process whereby best practices are highlighted for future reference and guidance.

Fourthly, the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, should always endeavour to open all channels of communication and consult with regional organizations.

Regions must play a primary role in the peace and security of their respective areas. ASEAN has concluded several initiatives that have significantly contributed to peace, security and stability in our region. Those include the declaration of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in South-East Asia, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord, the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Dialogue Process, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and regional actions undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations with regard to Cambodia and Timor-Leste.

We must also take an active interest in developments that relate to efforts to build stronger ties between our respective regions and the United Nations. One pressing issue involving ASEAN and the United Nations is the situation in Myanmar, or Burma. On the issue of Myanmar, the Philippines reiterates that ASEAN should continue to give full support to the good offices role of the Secretary-General in the person of Special Adviser Ibrahim Gambari. For the Philippines, it is our hope that all efforts in our region and here in the United Nations will produce positive and tangible outcomes that will lead to national reconciliation and a peaceful transition to democracy in Myanmar. It is our fervent and hopeful expectation that, to begin that national reconciliation and peaceful transition, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be immediately released without any condition or restriction, and that all parties, including the National League for Democracy, will be part of the democratization and constitutional process in Myanmar.

The President: Pursuant to the invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, I now give the floor to Mr. Yahya Mahmassani, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Sir, for convening this important debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. I also commend your delegation on assuming the presidency of the Council this month and pay tribute to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Ghana, for his outstanding guidance of the Council's work last month.

I would also like to welcome the presence here today of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

This meeting is of special importance in that it seeks to strengthen and activate the capacities and role of regional and subregional organizations as major adjuncts of the United Nations in dealing with various international political and socio-economic issues. The United Nations should act consistently to ensure that the Security Council assumes its primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. In response to the dangers and threats facing the international community, over the past decade the United Nations has developed new approaches, including, inter alia, establishing and promoting strategic partnerships and cooperative arrangements with regional organizations, including with the League of Arab States, that represent an important collective security mechanisms and play a significant role in the prevention and settlement of disputes.

In that regard, with respect to existing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, the League of Arab States continues tirelessly to promote international peace and security in the Middle East by taking every possible step to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations; to promote dialogue, confidence-building measures and the peaceful prevention and settlement of conflicts and disputes; and, of course, to build and maintain peace in post-conflict situations.

Based on the geographical and regional interrelationship between the regional organizations and the United Nations, I stress the effective role that the League of Arab States is playing in the maintenance of regional peace and security in coordination with the African Union and the United Nations. We are doing so in the context of the peace negotiations in the Sudan, following up on and addressing the current situation in Darfur, and of efforts to establish peace and stability in Somalia and the Horn of Africa.

The Security Council is faced with unprecedented challenges in maintaining international peace and security. As a result, it is vital for the Council to turn to regional organizations to settle issues in their respective regions and to deal with items that are on the agenda of the Security Council. Regional organizations should be given a participatory role in facing the threats that jeopardize international peace and security. For regional organizations in general and the League of Arab States in particular to play an effective role in maintaining international peace and security the United Nations and the Security Council must strengthen their partnership with those organizations and make optimal use of the obvious capabilities of a number of regional organizations in dealing with and managing international crises, given their comparative advantage and the added value that their actions would bring regionally. There is no doubt that marginalizing or excluding such regional organizations would not serve to advance joint international activities, the success of which depends on concerted international and regional efforts.

In 1992, the Secretary-General developed a peace plan, defining the concept of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations with the belief that this cooperation is an effective way to strengthen United Nations capacities in terms of preventative diplomacy, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. The Security Council has also affirmed the important role of the regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security and called upon those organizations to improve the coordination of their efforts with those of the United Nations. Allow me to recall here the declaration adopted in 1994 by the General Assembly on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. Since that time, five high-level meetings have been held between the General Assembly and heads of regional organizations.

In this context, we reiterate the call, launched by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for the holding of a conference to discuss questions of international security in the largest possible sense of the term. That would be an opportunity to reaffirm the protective and collective safeguarding of international peace and to address the challenges involved. Regional meetings would be held beforehand to prepare for the larger conference, which could make a major contribution to mobilizing international efforts and to educating worldwide public opinion with respect to the important role of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. João Salgueiro, Permanent Representative of Portugal, speaking on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

First of all, may I congratulate you, Sir, on the assumption of your duties as President of this Council and on the organization of this timely debate on a subject of deep interest to the European Union.

The European Union recognizes that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the United Nations. The European Union aims at supporting the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, in carrying out its responsibilities and addressing the challenges of conflict prevention, management and resolution as a way to strengthen effective multilateralism.

Pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter, regional and subregional organizations play a central role in the promotion of peace and security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Their preventive diplomacy capabilities and good offices may be used to avoid the occurrence or recurrence of violent conflicts, at both the national and the international levels. They are closer to the realities of the countries and regions and usually have the motivation and willingness to act quickly and effectively, helping to solve conflicts and mitigate their spill-over effects. They are also in a privileged position to support and enhance peacebuilding efforts.

We believe that the long-standing experience of the European Union and its unique nature, multiple instruments and considerable resources can be used in the context of a deeper and broader cooperation with the United Nations, as expressed in resolution 1631 (2005), in areas such as conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, security sector reform, combating terrorism, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The European Union is particularly pleased with the substantive progress in the cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union in crisis management, in particular the signing, in June 2007, of the Joint Statement on United Nations-European Union Cooperation in Crisis Management. Building on the previous Joint Declaration, of September 2003, the new document identifies four concrete areas for further cooperation between the two organizations: planning, training, communication and best practices. The European Union is actively engaged and fully committed to the implementation of the Joint Statement, through specific measures aimed at developing dialogue and the exchange of experience, on a regular basis and at different levels, as well as ensuring coherence between the policies pursued by the United Nations and the European Union. A similar cooperation in conflict prevention has been built in recent years with the Secretariat.

Allow me to refer to a few examples of how the European Union mobilizes its full scope of policies and instruments in a mutually supportive way to reinforce its cooperation with the United Nations and regional organizations in the peace and security continuum, from conflict prevention to peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

In the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy, two operations in 2003 were real and successful tests for the European Union-United Nations relationship: the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Union-led Operation Artemis, carried out in accordance with resolution 1484 (2003), which succeeded in stabilizing the security conditions, improving the humanitarian situation and protecting the civilian population in Bunia, in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In 2006, the European Union-led peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo assisted the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) during the electoral process. That military support has been complemented, since 2005, by two long-term civilian missions to support security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The launching of the European Union-led Chad/Central African Republic bridging military operation in support of the United Nations police force in eastern Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic represents a new step in our cooperation and a concrete example of how to maximize synergies and define responsibilities through a clear division of labour. By addressing the regional dimension of the Darfur crisis, the deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad in parallel with the deployment in the Sudan of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur is a necessary step to facilitate a long-lasting solution to violence in the region.

In the Balkans, the European Union's military operations enjoy support from NATO structures in a unique cooperation agreement between the two organizations. In Kosovo, a European team is carrying out preparatory activities, in close cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, for the launch, when the conditions have been met, of a European mission in the rule of law sector.

European Union development assistance is equally mobilized. In Darfur, the African Union's peacekeeping force, the African Union Mission in the Sudan, has been financially supported from the start through the African Peace Facility, an original commitment of €250 million, now raised to €385 million, to support African-led peace support operations and to enhance the institutional capacities of the African Union and subregional organizations in relation to peacekeeping and conflict prevention. Besides Darfur, the Facility has supported African peacekeeping efforts through the Multinational Force of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, the African Union Mission in Somalia and the African Union Mission for Support to the Elections in the Comoros. The sum of €27 million has been committed so far for capacity-building.

The new Instrument for Stability now also contributes to peace and security efforts, with first support being granted to the trust fund for the AU-United Nations Joint Mediation Support Team for Darfur, to the establishment of a United Nations-trained Chadian police component in the context of the aforementioned combined United Nations-EU intervention, as well as, in the case of Somalia, for the planning capacities of the AU Commission. National and regional envelopes of the European Development Fund likewise contribute to the African Peace and Security Architecture at country and subregional levels. Tripartite capacity programmes in association with the United Nations are being considered, notably in West Africa, involving the Economic Community of West African States. European Union development funds are also used worldwide for peacebuilding actions in post-conflict countries.

Support to the African Peace and Security Architecture is a key priority for the European Union and its member States, within the new strategic partnership that the European Union is establishing with the African Union. The European Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities (EURO-RECAMP) programme and the training of military and police forces involved in United Nations peacekeeping operations, through the programme's contribution to peacekeeping schools in Africa and Europe, also fit within this strategic partnership.

As is widely recognized, the European Union is itself a structure for peace and security in its region, based upon common values of peace, prosperity, good governance, human rights protection and the rule of law. We emphasize these same values in broader international relations.

The European Union takes an active role in enhancing regional cooperation throughout the European continent and its neighbouring regions, making use of mechanisms and policies such as the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Stabilization and Association process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership — which, by the way, has been holding meetings yesterday and today in Lisbon, bringing together 27 European countries and 10 countries of the eastern and southern Mediterranean area.

The European Union advocates a pragmatic and action-oriented approach, both for EU-United Nations cooperation and in the broader context of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. In that regard, we would like to present some suggestions on strengthening cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations, such as ensuring a more frequent dialogue between the United Nations and the EU on the maintenance of international peace and security, using the structure of the United Nations Secretariat and the Security Council; enhancing cooperation on aspects of multidimensional peacekeeping, including police, the rule of law and security sector reform; pursuing the establishment of specific coordination and cooperation mechanisms for crisis situations where the United Nations and the European Union are jointly engaged; organizing systematic United Nations-European Union joint lessons-learned exercises following cases of joint operational cooperation; and reinforcing the European Union's participation in the Peacebuilding Commission, drawing on our experience as a leading global player and a major provider of funds for peacebuilding activities.

To conclude, let me reiterate that the European Union will continue to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in every way possible, in cooperation with the United Nations and with other regional and subregional organizations.

The President: Pursuant to an invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdul Wahab, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Wahab: Mr. Minister, it is indeed a great pleasure for my delegation to see you presiding over this important debate. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is proud to have Indonesia as one of its active and important member States.

The evolving nature of present-day conflicts and security challenges transcends national and even regional boundaries. The OIC believes that regional and intergovernmental organizations are better placed to assess the root causes of conflicts and, accordingly, to devise specific strategies to tackle them. They have a greater vested interest, as they are attempting to resolve challenges arising in their own backyard. They also have an intimate understanding of the social, cultural, political and economic underpinnings of such conflicts and have the ability to identify and mobilize existing home-grown mechanisms to address them effectively and efficiently.

It is critical to proactively engage the concerned regional and other intergovernmental organizations from the very early stages, when the signs of instability first begin to appear. For this to happen, greater emphasis must be placed upon multilateralism, where cooperation and dialogue take precedence over unilateralism and division. Just over a month ago, at the beginning of October, the Foreign Ministers of the OIC member States adopted a final communiqué, in which they unanimously reiterated the need for evolving common perceptions and agreed approaches to address both new and existing threats to international peace and security in the context of multilateralism.

The OIC has time and again stated the view that approaching problems solely from the angle of security cannot lead to lasting and comprehensive solutions. Short-term solutions must give way to a proper understanding of the root causes of conflicts, which often lie in political grievances, backwardness and the underdeveloped situation of societies and their need for good governance.

As a mark of the OIC's commitment to address socio-economic problems that often serve as the root causes of conflict, our organization has launched a special fund for poverty alleviation in member States.

The OIC has been mandated by its Ten-Year Programme of Action to strengthen its role in conflict prevention, confidence-building, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation through enhanced cooperation with international and regional organizations. In this regard, the Secretary General of the OIC has personally taken an active role with regard to conflict resolution in several countries.

In working actively within the mechanisms of the United Nations, the OIC attaches pre-eminent importance to its association with the Peacebuilding Commission. The OIC will continue to remain actively engaged as the work of the Commission evolves to tackle complex challenges.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reiterate the essential need for effective multilateralism through political engagement and dialogue, at the highest level and within an atmosphere of mutual respect, as a prerequisite for effective cooperation.

The President: Pursuant to an invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Lila Hanitra Ratsifandrihamanana, Permanent Observer of the African Union.

Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana (*spoke in French*): Through this message on behalf of the Chair of its Commission, His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, the African Union welcomes the convening of this meeting. Its relevance is unanimously recognized and we appreciate the initiative. The question for consideration today has in recent years been given significant attention, in particular by the Security Council. That can be seen in the thematic debates to which the Council has always invited us and which have reflected the trust placed in regional organizations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Of course, before speaking of the role of regional organizations in that area, recognition of the primary responsibility of the Security Council is fundamental. Regional organizations for their part, intervene to help the United Nations and assume their share of the burden as part of the legitimate framework of the Charter of the Organization. They must act quickly in order to immediately stabilize a given situation. They then help to create conditions that are favourable for the deployment by the United Nations of a peacekeeping or peacebuilding operation, as part of a shared role based on complementarity and solidarity.

The increased cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union and its subregional organizations in the area of peacekeeping in Africa is an achievement that should be built upon. We have seen many positive experiences, such as the current deployment of the African Union-United Nations

Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the Security Council-authorized deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia and the predominant role of the Economic Community of West African States in crisis resolution in Côte d'Ivoire and elsewhere in West Africa.

Because of the concrete concerted action by the United Nations and the African Union in the area of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, important milestones have been put in place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Comoros, Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The majority of Security Council resolutions on crises in Africa have been adopted on the basis of recommendations made by the African Union. Finally, the leadership of the African Union is increasingly asserting its role in the coordination of political dialogues and peace talks in crisis situations throughout Africa.

All of those experiences display innovation, flexibility and, above all, the mobilization of the international community. Lessons of course are being learned in order to bring about more effective conflict management and to better coordination among the various levels of the global peace and security architecture.

It is time to implement the commitments already undertaken in various legal instruments in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular with regard to the United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union. We must coordinate our initiatives in order to avoid overlapping and duplication of efforts. The African Union-United Nations partnership must be coherent — which requires the harmonization of decision-making procedures, joint strategic analysis and systematic exchanges of information.

(*spoke in English*)

The realization of a peaceful, integrated and progressive Africa is at the very heart of the African Union, as provided for in its Constitutive Act. In order to fully assume that responsibility, the African Union has taken concrete steps to establish a comprehensive continental architecture for the maintenance of peace and security, including the Peace and Security Council itself, the African Union common defence mechanism, the African Stand-by Force, the African continental early warning system and the Panel of the Wise.

The African Union, as members are aware, has fully demonstrated its readiness to assume its share of responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security through its efforts in various situations. These were duly authorized by the Security Council and were conducted with the material, logistical and financial support of international partners. African Union member States have shown enthusiasm in responding to calls for troops and other personnel, as a strong mark of their own commitment to international peace and security. Using various mechanisms and working in close cooperation with its subregional organizations, the African Union continues to devote significant efforts and leadership to address crises around the continent.

One of the realities that have emerged from the field experience of the African Union is the crucial need for a sustainable mechanism for funding peacekeeping operations conducted by regional organizations on behalf of the Security Council. Our shared aspiration — the establishment of a United Nations mechanism, under Chapter VIII of the Charter — reflects the constant desire of the Council itself to strengthen regional organizations as key partners in the effective discharge of its responsibilities.

The absence of a predictable mechanism to support peacekeeping efforts of regional organizations may create an atmosphere conducive to the escalation of hostilities. Also, delays in responding to a crisis often result in the dislocation of the social fabric of communities. This means that the most credible and immediate opportunities for early peacemaking may be lost, necessitating long, complex and expensive peace processes at a later stage, as we have seen the cases of Somalia and the Sudan. The Rwandan genocide remains an indelible mark on our collective memory concerning the lack of an early and effective response to a crisis situation.

In that light, we therefore wish to reiterate our call to the Security Council to take all necessary measures to give greater impetus to the effective establishment of a United Nations mechanism for funding peacekeeping operations conducted on its behalf by regional organizations. The Council is very familiar with the strengths which regional organizations bring. Our ability to fully leverage them will be crucial for the effectiveness of the emerging partnership in the maintenance of international peace and security.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, the debate that the Council has begun accords with our aspiration to cooperate resolutely with the United Nations, and in particular with the Security Council, in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council's initiative, above all, parallels the aspirations of all African men and women to live in a world of harmony and well-being.

The President: Pursuant to an invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nurbek Jeenbaev, Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations, who will speak on behalf of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Mr. Jeenbaev (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on becoming President of the Security Council, and I wish you all possible success in this responsible post.

In speaking today, representing the country chairing the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), I would like to note the importance of the Indonesian delegation's timely convening of this meeting on the role of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. We are convinced that under your skilful leadership, Sir, the Council will achieve successful results. Please allow me, Minister Wirajuda, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the CSTO, Mr. Bordyuzha, who because of certain obligations was unable to come to New York, to convey words of appreciation for your invitation to him to participate in today's meeting.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization welcomes the opportunity offered by these debates to speak on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, as well as on ways to broaden the impact of such cooperation for the successful attainment of our purposes and goals. We note the importance of improving coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations, and we share the interest in finding ways to improve this coordination as part of the continuing search for joint efforts to identify useful and effective methods to ensure international peace and security. We are convinced that the work of regional and subregional organizations in peacekeeping, with skilful implementation, could help to strengthen possibilities and encourage success in achieving the various critically important purposes of the United Nations.

Today, regional organizations are assigned an important role in conflict prevention and settlement, as well as in post-conflict peacebuilding. Geographical proximity and close historical and cultural ties between their members give regional organizations comparative advantages in better understanding the root causes of regional conflict and in more successfully seeking peaceful solutions to those problems. Recent operations of the United Nations in support of peace have been implemented in close cooperation between the Organization and regional and subregional organizations.

In this regard, I would like to briefly report on recent decisions by the CSTO in the area of peacekeeping.

The Collective Security Council of the CSTO confirms its efforts to ensure collective security and stability within the purview of CSTO and states its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to the decisions of the United Nations Security Council and to the generally recognized norms of international law. Given the importance of ensuring effective participation of the CSTO and its member States in efforts to maintain international peace and security, and considering that the participation of the CSTO in peacekeeping activities is an effective instrument for strengthening its international positions, authority and political influence in global and regional affairs, and also on the basis of our founding documents, on 6 October 2007 in Dushanbe, the CTSO approved the agreement on CSTO peacekeeping activity.

Additionally, the Collective Security Council of the CSTO adopted a decision on documents for a normative and organizational structure, within the CSTO, of a peacekeeping mechanism, including a provision for collective peacekeeping forces of the CSTO, a provision on an operations working group to prepare CSTO peacekeeping operations and a provision on the chief of the CSTO peacekeeping mission.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend with the concurrence of members of the Council to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5776/Corr.1

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5776th meeting

Tuesday, 6 November 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

Corrigendum

Page 2, first column, second paragraph

In the list of countries whose representatives are requesting an invitation to participate, *insert* Guatemala, Guinea and Honduras.

United Nations S/PV.5776 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5776th meeting

Tuesday, 6 November 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Wirajuda	(Indonesia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Cartuyvels
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	Congo	Mr. Maboundou
	France	Mr. Renié
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Italy	Mr. Azzarello
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Peru	Mr. Gallardo
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Henzab
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Kačo
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Saltonstall
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

Letter dated 29 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/640)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Benin and Thailand, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Zinsou (Benin) and Mr. Pramudwinai (Thailand) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers, as I indicated this morning, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now call on the representative of Angola.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I would like to congratulate the Indonesian presidency for convening this important meeting and welcome with appreciation the insightful concept paper (S/2007/640, annex) circulated prior to this meeting. Thank you, Mr. Minister, for coming all the way from Jakarta to chair this important meeting today. Your presence honours us and enhances the value of the deliberations of the Council on the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

As rightly mentioned in the concept paper, "Over the years, there has been a plethora of efforts in promotion of such an objective, including through the adoption of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005)" (ibid., para. 2). We fully share this vision of the situation, which now calls for concrete action in order to match the consensual recognition of the central role of regional and subregional organizations as instrumental mechanisms in the collective security system.

Regarding the African continent, the Security Council has held special meetings and has adopted several presidential statements and resolutions, including recently holding a summit meeting dedicated to the African continent. The problems and possible solutions are therefore fully identified.

Both the Security Council and the African Union recognize the importance of having an effective system of coordination between the United Nations, the African Union and subregional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States, Economic Community of Central African States, the Southern African Development Community, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, the East African Community, the Arab Maghreb Union and others.

We therefore welcome the steps taken towards the implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome decision on the 10-year process of sustained capacity-building support within the African Union strategic framework, as well as the reflection underway in the Department of Political Affairs on how to better liaise with the different regions, including by enhancing the presence of the United Nations on the ground through regional offices. Cooperation with local bodies, particularly in the field of police training for peacekeeping operations, should be stressed. In this connection, we reiterate our call to the donor community to assist the efforts under way on the continent. The initiative recently launched by Cameroon, the Ecole internationale des forces de sécurité to train police from African countries, is a good example.

Africa has been the ground for useful experiences in peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, including the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the deployment of multinational forces and the bluehelmeting of African regional and subregional forces such as in Burundi and Côte d'Ivoire. All those experiences have had an impact on the action of the United Nations, the reform of its bodies such as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the philosophy of the Organization in shaping a new vision of global security.

The concept paper you have distributed, Mr. President, calls our attention to the important question of the innovative initiative consisting of a hybrid model being tested in Africa. While addressing the Fourth Committee, Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno of the DPKO recalled the work being developed by his Department in establishing the initial operating capabilities of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. In this connection, the multidimensional presence in Chad and the Central African Republic — the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad — to be deployed by end of this year in close concert with the European Union would constitute a welcome development.

It is our hope that those experiences will serve as catalysts for strategic partnerships with regional organizations in order to maximize their impact and increase the likelihood of successful peace and security outcomes. Important lessons should also be drawn with regard to the need for reducing the time between decision and implementation. Those two experiences will be decisive concerning the use of the model in future circumstances.

Peacebuilding is also a question of great importance for the African continent, in view of the increasing number of countries in post-conflict situations. The experiences under way in Burundi and Sierra Leone point to the direction and to the need for strengthening the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund. One of the lessons drawn from the peacebuilding work in these countries and the presence of peacekeeping operations is the need to improve the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. The United Nations peacebuilding architecture should also take into account the efforts of the African Union in the establishment of a peacebuilding regional mechanism.

By creating the Organization of the African Unity — which later became the African Union — and by establishing subregional bodies, the African continent recognized very early the importance of those institutions and has spared no effort to preserve them. Those bodies are therefore pivotal partners for the United Nations. This partnership requires, inter alia, adequate structures in the United Nations Secretariat, a fluid communication channel and the enhancement of the role of the mechanisms established by the Security Council, including the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

Before I conclude, let me reiterate the view that clearly there is added value in strengthened and coordinated action between the Security Council and the regional and subregional organizations. The maintenance of peace and security is clearly better served if this coordination becomes more real and action-oriented. This debate today represents an important contribution towards reaching this urgent goal.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): At the outset, I would like to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for organizing and presiding over this open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Kazakhstan fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Kyrgyz Republic on behalf of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Kazakhstan considers this important issue to be one of the main priorities of the Organization and the Security Council. In particular, the Security Council should encourage cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements to promote international peace and security, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Resolution 1631 (2005) underlines the Security Council's commitment to taking appropriate steps to the further development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations and recognizes the growing contribution by regional arrangements to the maintenance of international peace and security.

We note with satisfaction that over the years, many efforts have been made to promote such objectives. There have been debates in the Security Council on conflict management and post-conflict stabilization processes and the role of regional organizations in peace and security. In previous presidential statements, closer cooperation with regional and subregional organizations on peace and security issues was supported, including the brokering of peace agreements in conflict situations.

We welcome the growing role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security and an enhanced international cooperation, while supporting the principle of multilateralism in addressing burning international issues.

It is now obvious that in recent years, the international community has seen a rapid surge in peacekeeping missions, and this trend is likely to continue. The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations currently directs 18 such operations across the world, comprising more than 130,000 troops, police and civilian personnel.

We believe that peacekeeping operations under the aegis of the United Nations remain the most effective tool for preventing and settling various crises and for ensuring global and regional stability. In light of this, our country firmly supports United Nations peacekeeping efforts and the continued strengthening of its capacity in this area.

In a situation of escalating humanitarian crises and armed conflicts, as clearly demonstrated by the developments in Darfur, the United Nations and the Security Council should pay special attention to the possibility of broader participation by authoritative regional and subregional organizations in peacekeeping operations. That would allow a response to emerging threats in a more effective and timely manner.

We believe it to be of great importance to establish closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations possessing real capacity to prevent conflicts and maintain peace. From this point of view, we encourage the Security Council to formulate coherent, common operational strategies and early, integrated mission planning in close cooperation with regional partners of the Organization.

Regional and subregional entities are in a position to better understand local and regional conditions and have influence on the prevention or resolution of conflicts, and they contribute to the maintenance of peace and stability in various parts of the world. In this context we are pleased that the United Nations engagement with regional organizations is growing. In particular, a number of regional organizations have already received observer status at the General Assembly, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. On behalf of 18 Member States, Kazakhstan has requested the General Assembly to grant observer status to the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia (CICA). We hope that the Assembly will support this proposal.

I would like to note that CICA is an intergovernmental forum for dialogue, consultations, consensus-based decision-making and implementation involving issues of security in Asia. On the Asian continent, CICA is seen as a unique structure uniting the countries of the region in the task of strengthening mutual cooperation in order to stabilize and safeguard the region.

At present, 18 countries of Asia and Europe participate in CICA as member States, with the United Nations as an observer organization. We strongly believe that the CICA platform for dialogue will continue to play an effective role as a collective mechanism for regional stability and security in Asia.

My delegation considers it very useful to carry on our work to further enhance the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security within the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly. We hope that the broad views expressed by Member States today will serve to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) *(spoke in Spanish)*: First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month and to thank your delegation for convening this open debate.

Due to the shared responsibilities and interrelated interests of their members, international organizations are in a privileged position to respond to regional challenges to international peace and security in an expeditious manner and with better knowledge of the local causes of conflicts. Those efforts must complement those of the United Nations, especially in areas where the given regional organization has comparative advantage, and the mission should be implemented with a high measure of cooperation with the United Nations.

In our judgement, there are four situations where the United Nations and regional organizations may complement each other in conflict resolution: first, in the deployment of joint missions; secondly, when the United Nations can take responsibility for continuing a peacekeeping operation initiated by a regional organization; thirdly, when a regional organization can take the responsibility of continuing a peacekeeping operation initiated by the United Nations; and finally, when the United Nations can delegate the deployment of a peacekeeping operation to a regional organization when it considers this more efficient.

In any event, as stipulated by the United Nations Charter, in all the above cases the maintenance of international peace and security is always the primary responsibility of the Security Council, as Chapter VIII of the Charter ensures that the Security Council has the ability to authorize regional organizations to implement coercive actions. At the same time, in all these cases, complementing funds and corresponding financing will always be required.

In its presidential statement of 28 March, 2007 (S/PRST/2007/7) on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council recalled that cooperation between the United Nations and the regional arrangements in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security were an integral part of collective security as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations and welcomed the Declaration on enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

In this context, we are pleased with the initiative to give assistance to the African Union to increase its peacekeeping capacity with the objective of establishing a permanent African reserve force by 2010, as well as the initiatives of the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States or the Southern African Development Community to create reserve brigades for peacekeeping in their respective subregions.

In the American region, the case of Haiti deserves mention as a model for cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS). We can say that the OAS has established a strategic association with the United Nations, facilitating the fulfilment of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti through the leadership and accumulated experience of the organization.

The OAS has contributed its specific technical knowledge and has actively collaborated in the political dimension and, specifically, in the continuity of the electoral process. That has been fundamental for the organization of free and clean elections, from which the current democratic Haitian Government has sprung.

Cooperation under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations provides enormous possibilities to optimize resources and stimulate the political will of the international community to achieve peace and security through an effective operational association between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. It is therefore desirable to promote formal and informal consultation mechanisms that will allow the United Nations and regional organizations to mutually enrich that interaction. We believe that when the universal Organization studies a specific conflict, prior to taking action on the ground, it should ideally have available to it the opinion and advice of the relevant regional organization and give that organization's point of view adequate consideration.

In conclusion, we believe that greater decentralization in, and delegation of, peacekeeping operations to regional organizations, along with greater cooperation and coordination among those organizations and the Security Council, will not only alleviate the actual burden on United Nations peacekeeping, whose resources are at their limit, but, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, it could also enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions authorized by the Security Council. We therefore think it is important for there to be a balanced distribution of capacity and resources for all regions of the world, in order that the knowledge of regional organizations with regard to conflict situations may also be utilized.

Systematic cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations that includes a clear distribution of functions and adequate capacities will increase the effectiveness of the international community to prevent conflicts. It would make possible a speedier response when a conflict arises and provide solutions for building lasting peace. Given the existing link between security, peace and development, we believe that the specialized knowledge of regional organizations, whose original mandates were to foment economic and commercial integration, may also be of value in ensuring the success of strategies aimed at economic growth and long-term stability.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, and your country, Indonesia, on your presidency of the Security Council. I would especially like to thank you, Mr. Minister, for your presence in New York to preside over this meeting.

Before I turn to the topic that has brought us together today, I would like to make a few brief comments on the open debates of the Security Council.

I assume that the purpose of open debates is to allow the members of the Security Council to hear the views and opinions of the other delegations to the United Nations that are not members of this body. I am concerned because this is not the first time that I have come to make a statement in the Security Council that I have observed a phenomenon repeating itself time and again. A sort of migration from the Council usually occurs 90 minutes after a meeting begins, with the principal members of the Secretariat and Permanent Representatives gradually leaving the Chamber. Moreover, at this very moment I notice that only the President and another head of Mission are the only Permanent Representatives seated at the table. Apparently, there are other more important things attracting the attention of our colleagues. It is a shame that this meeting has been scheduled at the same time as those other activities. I therefore hope that this is not considered as a second-class exercise or a meeting just for show. As far as the working methods of the Security Council are concerned — a phrase that is referred to continuously in this House — this is one that should be reformed thoroughly.

With regard to the issue before the Council, my delegation would like to offer the following comments. We are going to approach this matter from a different point of view than in the past, when doctrinaire debates were held during the cold war with regard to the application of coercive measures and corresponding interpretations of the application of Articles 41, 42, 51, 52 and 53 of the Charter.

In current international practice, the participation of regional organizations is part of the Organization's overall framework, bringing to it the best capabilities of the various regions in rebuilding and strengthening States affected by conflict. It is therefore appropriate that we continue a debate in the Security Council as to the function of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In the debate that took place in March, we focused our comments on the possibility that regional organizations could assume greater responsibility in the area of military operations. We also expressed our doubts about the desirability of moving towards the regionalization of peacekeeping operations and the need to fully respect certain traditional principles of peacekeeping operations, especially those of impartiality and the need for the composition of a force to reflect the widest possible geographical representation.

On this occasion, I should like to take up the issue of the role of regional organizations once they are already involved in peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks. It is in that area that we can appreciate the great potential regional organizations hold for cooperation with United Nation-led processes. We believe that there is clearly value to arguments calling for greater participation for regional organizations in the areas of peace and security and, more specifically, in post-conflict reconstruction and development. It is at the regional level that the consequences of a conflict are most immediately felt. States in the region of a conflict are in the best position to understand the situation in its cultural context. It is also the States of the region that have the most information.

With regard to the States of Latin America and the Caribbean, we have the contemporary example of countries of the region and the Organization of American States (OAS) joining in the peacemaking efforts of the United Nations in Haiti. Those countries provided military contingents. Above all, however, working through the OAS — they brought to bear their experiences in post-conflict reconstruction in various areas, including in the areas of humanitarian assistance, the strengthening of democratic State institutions, medical and economic assistance and development aid.

I do not want to exhaustively enumerate the activities of the OAS in the field, but its support is essential and invaluable for States participating in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. However, I should mention its electoral support aimed at Haiti's establishment of a permanent electoral commission; its support in strengthening institutions; the process to update Haiti's civil registry; its support in strengthening Haiti's judicial system, in particular through the Justice Studies Center of the Americas and the Inter-American Juridical Committee; its promotion of tourism and trade; its support for activities to generate employment and improve the economy; its assistance in the area of management training and coordination of foreign aid; its support for the Government of Haiti in formulating development policies in coordination with the United Nations, the Caribbean Community and other institutions; and the implementation of OAS resolutions aimed at increasing cooperation with Haiti with a view to operationalize the National Drug Observatory through technical and scientific capacity-building.

I should also underscore the steps being taken by the OAS with international financial institutions, and in particular the role of the Inter-American Development Bank. Those institutions closely support the development priorities of the Government of Haiti by providing financial assistance for programmes intended to create jobs, promote education and rehabilitate the environment. They also support health policy in various areas.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Shinyo (Japan): Allow me, first, to join other speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for your initiative to convene this meeting with representatives from many regional and subregional organizations. Through the strengthening of the capacities of regional and subregional organizations and the experience accumulated between the United Nations and those organizations beginning in the late 1990s, the United Nations relationship with regional and subregional organizations has produced significant developments on the ground. It is my hope that the discussion today will build on past open debates in the Security Council and lead to concrete steps towards the further enhancement of such cooperation.

I would like to begin with the issue of conflict prevention. Conflict prevention requires continuous efforts, and thus it is often difficult to discern clear signs of success. In such circumstances, the role of regional and subregional organizations is crucial in complementing the work of the Council and supporting the good offices of the Secretary-General. Those organizations closely monitor a situation on an ongoing basis and practice active preventive diplomacy based on a strong interest in and deep knowledge of the particular region. A well-known example of such cooperation is the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) field missions and groups such as the OSCE Minsk Group. Japan is counting on regional organizations and initiatives to increase their role in mediation and preventive diplomacy in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. It is essential in that field to institutionalize the cooperation between regional organizations and the Secretariat through frequent communications, information sharing — including in those areas where there is no United Nations presence — and the establishment of a closer working relationship among the field offices. In that context, we welcome the fact that some organizations recently have developed memorandums of understanding and declarations with the United Nations, and hope that such arrangements will also help to eliminate administrative obstacles to further cooperation.

The contribution of regional organizations such as the African Union, the European Union and NATO in the field of peacekeeping has been outstanding. There can be no doubt about the importance of the role of regional organizations in that area. Once a threat to the peace and security of a region has emerged, the ability of regional organizations to deploy capable troops swiftly and at the right time, at the request of the Security Council and through consultation with the United Nations, is a great asset for the Council, as well as for the international community at large, in responding effectively to a crisis. We welcome the variety brought to the modality of engagement by regional organizations, such as the deployment of police forces and military or police advisors to support security sector reform.

I would like to mention one related issue. With regard to the currently pressing issue of the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the Japanese delegation strongly hopes for the acceleration of the preparations and believes that further cooperation among the various actors, including the Government of the Sudan, is important to that end.

The United Nations and the international community must make active use of those efforts by regional and subregional organizations and support them to the maximum extent. The true exercise of ownership consists in regional organizations' having the ability to sustain their own activities. The international community must render assistance by promoting the decision-making and operational capacity-building of those organizations. In that context, the African Union secretariat's efforts to enhance its capacity, with the support of the United Nations Secretariat, are welcomed.

Japan believes that the sharing of knowledge and experiences among organizations is useful and should therefore be promoted among regional organizations. We encourage, in that regard, advancing the institutionalization of cooperation not only with the United Nations, but also among regional and subregional organizations themselves.

As regards support for the peacekeeping operations conducted by regional organizations, in principle every organization should be responsible for its own costs. When the United Nations examines the possibility of offering financial support, the Council should consider the advisability and modality of support on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether such support would be consistent with the principles that govern United Nations peacekeeping operations, while making an effort to obtain the views of major States that are not members of the Council — in particular, major financial contributors — so as to ensure transparency. In addition, once a peacekeeping operation has been deployed, the same rules and standards for its management as those in place at the United Nations should be strictly applied.

Peacebuilding is another area in which Japan believes regional and subregional organizations can make a contribution. Peacebuilding requires a holistic and integrated approach and the participation of all the stakeholders in the process. The Peacebuilding Commission was established precisely to ensure such an approach. It should be noted that the Commission is a unique and open organization, insofar as it includes regional and subregional organizations as members in its country-specific meetings, as well as member States selected from among various groups. As the Chair for the second year of the Commission's work, Japan encourages regional organizations to contribute to a more effective response on the part of the international community by providing their knowledge and assessment to the Commission, where appropriate. In that context, I am pleased by the decision of the Commission to invite the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to the country-specific meeting on Burundi, and welcome its active participation in the work of the Commission. We also welcome the language related to the Peacebuilding Commission that is incorporated in today's presidential statement.

Allow me also to touch briefly on the issue of counter-terrorism. That is an area in which regional and subregional organizations can also play an important role by implementing the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. In Asia, the framework of regional cooperation, with the Association of South-East Asian Nations at its centre, is enhancing its efforts in that field, and Japan has been actively supporting those efforts.

The Government of Japan has always paid close attention to the root causes of conflicts and taken an approach that respects regional ownership, as well as making financial contributions through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, the United Nations Democracy Fund and the Peacebuilding Fund. We have been promoting peace consolidation in Africa through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process, which included the TICAD Conference on Consolidation of Peace at Addis Ababa in February 2006. We will hold the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development in May next year, followed by the G8 Hokkaido Toyako summit in July. Japan intends to continuously present the challenges in Africa as a priority area and to further enhance its cooperation with Africa.

In addition to those initiatives, we intend to continue to extend bilateral and multilateral assistance in such areas as the collection of small arms; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and the response to landmines, as well as to provide support to the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa for capacity-building. We will also continue our consideration of the possibility of offering further assistance to strengthen the peacekeeping capacity of Africa. Through those endeavours, Japan will remain actively engaged in the issue of conflict prevention and resolution.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the work of the Security Council this month. I also congratulate you on having organized this important public debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Guinea welcomes this wholesome initiative, which attests to the renewed and growing interest in strengthening the ways and means for such organizations fully to honour their commitment, which has become crucial, to promoting the prevention and settlement of conflicts and the maintenance and building of peace around the world.

While endorsing the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Angola on behalf of the African Union, I shall focus in my own on the critical challenges to and opportunities for the international community in promoting peace, security, stability and development in the subregion of the Mano River basin. The situation in that highly sensitive region, which is considered to be the source of instability in West Africa, has undoubtedly witnessed important progress, reflected in particular in the building of peace and democratization in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the relaunching of the peace and reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire, and the strengthening of national dialogue and the restoration of conditions of good governance and economic growth in Guinea. While welcoming that progress, which augurs well for the future of the subregion, we should not let our guard down. Further progress is still necessary to eradicate forever the fundamental factors behind instability, to prevent a recurrence of conflict and crisis, to ensure the viability of States and to build a lasting peace.

Indeed, after 15 years of armed violence, the States and peoples of the Mano River region are today at a turning point in their history. They need to individually and collectively meet the immense challenges of political, economic and social reconstruction, the establishment of a lawful State that respects human rights and the settlement of transboundary issues, including human and drug trafficking, terrorism and the traffic in firearms.

In that context, we must welcome the recent encouraging prospects for reactivating the Mano River Union and for resuming an ongoing dialogue at all levels among its member States. The Mano River Union, which on 3 October 2007 commemorated 34 years of existence, is working to be at the very heart of the subregion's transformation. The member States are committed, in that respect, to reactivating the secretariat of the Union and revitalizing its operational mechanisms, particularly the 15th Protocol to the Mano River Union Declaration, which addresses community issues of defence, security, justice, territorial administration and foreign affairs.

The countries of the Mano River basin are also seeking to strengthen their transboundary cooperation in order to better address the interlinked issues of peace, security and integrated economic development in the subregion. Therefore, on the initiative of Guinea, a draft pact on good-neighbourly relations, stability and solidarity was submitted in November 2006 to the member countries of the Mano River Union, to which it had been proposed to add Côte d'Ivoire. The draft pact is an important confidence-building measure, which should become effective and operational as soon as it is adopted.

We must encourage and support the initiatives of the Mano River Union aimed at carrying out institutional reforms promoting closer subregional integration among its countries and ensuring greater effectiveness in the settlement of transboundary problems.

Building the capacity of civil society groups that are working to promote, beyond their borders, a culture of non-violence and peace is a vital task. Volunteer organizations such as the Mano River Women's Peace Network, the Mano River Union Youth Parliament and the Action Group of Religious Faiths, which have played a major role in the restoration of peace, need to be involved in all phases of programmes of action.

The adoption of a truly regional viewpoint to advance the peace agenda is necessary to prevent a recurrence of conflict. Priorities that are clearly fixed by member States need to be supported by United Nations entities, donors and all relevant stakeholders.

Guinea welcomes the success of the Peacebuilding Commission in dealing with countries emerging from conflict. We encourage the Commission to continue to fulfil its mandate with the same rigour and effectiveness, while expanding its action to include all other involved countries. We also believe that it is equally important for the international community to provide the necessary support to neighbouring countries weakened by the serious effects of conflict on their borders. We should also further affirm the role of the Peacebuilding Commission as the body for coordination between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations, as suggested by the President of the Security Council in his statement of 28 March 2007 (S/PRST/2007/7).

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate my delegation's conviction that this meeting of the Security Council will undoubtedly contribute to identifying specific and promising paths for action, enabling us to strengthen the role of regional and subregional organizations in promoting peace, stability and development in Africa and around the world.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): I would like to express my appreciation to the Indonesian presidency of the Council for initiating this open debate and to personally thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to share my views on this pivotal subject.

Shortly after the foundation of the United Nations, international developments led to the creation of various regional initiatives and organizations. It became obvious that the international community needed a number of organizations to address the challenges of differing natures arising in different regions and in a variety of spheres. Those organizations have been instrumental in handling regional problems and settling local disputes. In that regard, I fully share the opinion expressed by the representative of the European Union. Indeed, the regional organizations are closer to the facts on the ground and possess a storehouse of historical experience and unique perceptions that sometimes overshadow realities; they often have greater motivation to tackle explosive problems quickly and effectively.

I would like to speak about two regional organizations in particular.

Established shortly after the United Nations, the Council of Europe has made a tremendous contribution to regional stability through the promotion of democracy and the rule of law. Its activities have been instrumental, especially for the new democracies that emerged after the cold war. The focus of the Council of Europe on remedying the socioeconomic and political conditions that exacerbate conflicts is truly a valuable long-term contribution.

In that same sense, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) also plays a central role in creating conditions that will provide security in our region, by requiring commitments from participating States and utilizing mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe is among the OSCE tools providing for an effective and unique set of arms control mechanisms. The complete observance of the agreed arrangements by the countries of the South Caucasus is a sine qua non for the maintenance of stability and peace in our region, where, regrettably, the resumption of hostilities is indeed still possible. We believe that the organization should pay special attention to — and watchfully consider — all violations of the ceilings established for conventional weapons in the South Caucasus.

However, it is the fundamental OSCE principle of consensus that distinguishes it from other international forums. The comparative advantage of the OSCE over other international bodies lies in its consensus-based decision-making mechanism. We strongly believe that only consensus among the concerned parties leads to genuine, willing compromise and guarantees lasting solutions to seemingly intractable disputes.

Past experience clearly illustrates that imposed settlements are not only ineffective but also fragile and unable to withstand the test of time. The very existence of various international organizations dealing with conflict resolution proves that uniform approaches and one-size-fits-all solutions to address different disputes are hardly realistic. Therefore, we believe that since every conflict has its prehistory and its peculiarities, it is important that regional organizations — or those with appropriate mandates, with acquired institutional memory and with an understanding of the specifics of the history and evolution of a conflict — be allowed to tackle comprehensive solutions that will last, instead of offering philosophical, well-meaning remedies, which at best result in a loss of time, and at worst, in a loss of life and hope.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. de Palacio España (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would sincerely like to thank the presidency of Indonesia for this new opportunity given to my country to address the United Nations Security Council. Spain is the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for 2007. I would also like to associate myself with the statement made this morning by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the presidency of the European Union.

As Council members may recall, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, Mr. Moratinos Cuyaubé, had the opportunity of speaking before the Security Council in his capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE on 28 September 2007, to inform the Council about the activities of the Organization during 2007.

The OSCE, recognized as a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, is the most inclusive security organization in Europe and the largest regional security organization anywhere in the world. It plays a significant role in support of the Security Council, which retains the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The OSCE is well suited to play this role.

Based on its ample membership, its concept of multidimensional and cooperative security, its well developed toolbox and its comprehensive body of norms and commitments, the OSCE is an indispensable forum for political and security dialogue. On a weekly basis, through meetings in Vienna of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Cooperation, 56 participating States from North America, Europe and Eurasia come together to discuss issues of mutual interest in the politico-military, economic and human dimensions of security.

Thanks to its network of 19 missions in the field in 17 countries and the professional work of its secretariat and institutions, the OSCE provides assistance to its participating States on a broad range of issues, such as border management and security, policing, combating terrorism, fighting trafficking in human beings, protecting national minorities, advancing democratization and human rights, elections monitoring, ensuring media freedom, and promoting economic development and environmental protection.

Over the years, the OSCE has contributed greatly to the efforts of the United Nations in conflict prevention and resolution, and peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, as well as the settlement of unresolved conflicts within its geographical area of responsibility. In Georgia, the OSCE mission works to defuse tension, promote negotiations, build confidence and sustain reconstruction efforts in the zone of the Georgia-Ossetia conflict. The mission also works to support the United Nations-led peace process in the Georgia-Abkhaz conflict, striving to foster a climate of understanding and promote dialogue when incidents do occur, as in the case of the missile incident of 6 August, and to find ways of avoiding future crises.

The Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group remain committed to a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, although their efforts have not yet resulted in the desired breakthrough. The OSCE mission to Moldova continues to facilitate consultations aimed at a sustainable political settlement of the Transdnistrian conflict. In parallel, it works to support the advancement of human rights and democratic institutions. A recent visit to Moldova by Foreign Minister Moratinos in his capacity as OSCE Chairman-in-Office has triggered positive developments on both sides of the Dniestr River. During follow-up consultations to be held in Madrid on 13 November, Mr. Moratinos will seek to build upon this progress.

In Kosovo, the OSCE mission works as an integral part of the United Nations mission in the framework of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), taking the lead in the areas of human rights and of capacity- and institution-building. While we support the efforts of the Security Council and the European Union-United States-Russia troika to help facilitate a just and lasting solution that advances the stability of the region, our own mission is neutral, aimed at improving the implementation of standards without regard to the eventual shape of a political settlement. This work remains vital to all of Kosovo's citizens and will, we hope, not be lost in the current politically charged climate. Furthermore, the OSCE actively supports the implementation of Security Council resolutions, in particular in the areas of combating terrorism and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Our organization also facilitates the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The OSCE remains strongly committed to continue providing assistance to the activities of the Security Council and to strengthening cooperation with the United Nations. In March 2006, OSCE member States reiterated this readiness by adopting a Declaration on Cooperation with the United Nations, responding to the call by the United Nations for strengthened cooperation with regional organizations, as expressed in Security Council resolution 1631 (2005).

In this spirit, the OSCE acknowledges the great value of the annual thematic debates between the Security Council and regional organizations. These debates offer a unique venue for the exchange of views, information and experience-sharing, as well as for exploring possibilities for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. In the same vein, the OSCE very much welcomes regular high-level meetings between the United Nations Secretary-General and regional organizations.

We particularly appreciate the good practice of inviting the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to deliver an annual address to the Security Council. We hope this will become a well established tradition to help the Security Council to familiarize itself with the priorities and activities of the OSCE. Annual United Nations-OSCE staff-level meetings, as well as regular participation of the United Nations representatives at the OSCE regional heads of mission meetings, are also very useful additional tools for turning political commitment into practical cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations, in seeking to reach our common goal of strengthened international peace and security.

Each regional organization possesses its own unique expertise, based on the mandates and tools at its disposal. As such, each regional organization acts as an invaluable partner to the United Nations and this Security Council. Taking advantage of this opportunity, with several other regional organizations gathered around this table, I would also like to reaffirm the OSCE's commitment to continue enhancing dialogue with our 11 Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Cooperation. In addition, acknowledging the potential spill-over of security threats between adjacent regions, our organization stands ready further to exchange experiences and expertise with other regional organizations, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Indeed, by strengthening dialogue and seeking greater synergy, the United Nations and regional organizations can widen the range of instruments to be utilized in the common effort of strengthening international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): On behalf of the delegation of Viet Nam, I would like to congratulate you and your country, Indonesia, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month. We warmly welcome your initiative to hold a debate on this important topic and highly appreciate your substantive concept paper on the topic. I am confident that, under your skilful leadership, this meeting will arrive at a very successful conclusion.

At a time when the contemporary world faces a wide array of interconnected, transnational and transregional threats, the international community has increasingly recognized the pivotal role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

My delegation wishes to recall that Chapter VIII of the Charter, while reaffirming the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity in the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, underlines the importance of pacific settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements. As also noted in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), the multidimensional nature of the challenges facing the Organization calls for a multidisciplinary approach involving multiple actors at both the diagnostic and the treatment phases of crises and thus opens up new venues for interaction and for contributions by regional players to collective security.

It should be underscored that by resolution 1631 (2005) the Council resolves to expand the involvement of regional organizations in the work of the Council and to encourage their proper contributions to conflict prevention and peacekeeping operations of the United Nations. At the same time, multifaceted cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and the means to develop such cooperation have been substantially reflected in various resolutions and reports adopted by the General Assembly.

On the implementation front, we are convinced that geographic proximity and close historical and cultural ties among their members give regional organizations the advantage in better understanding the root causes of regional conflicts and in finding peaceful solutions to those problems. Recent experiences in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Balkans underscore the growing importance of regional organizations as partners of the United Nations in the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts as well as in peacebuilding and stabilization processes. Resources from regional players also strengthen global action to counter the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the illegal circulation of small arms and light weapons, to combat the drug trade and organized crime and to resolve other destabilizing cross-border issues.

While it is true that not all regional organizations work in the same manner and that regional perspectives should be respected, Viet Nam recognizes certain areas in which the contributions of regional organizations to international peace and security can be further elaborated and strengthened. Based upon their unique experience within their own sphere of action and their rich knowledge of local cultural conditions, regional organizations should further concentrate on preventive diplomacy, early warning mechanisms, institution-building and the promotion of development and well-being. Regional organizations should be encouraged to assume a key role in providing information from the field and in helping to formulate the peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies of the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and other organs. In the field, for example, the expertise and resources of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of American States, the League of Arab States, the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the African Union and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), among others, have made commendable contributions to peacekeeping operations and post-conflict reconstruction activities of the United Nations.

Equally important, possible modalities of partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations must be further explored and expanded on the basis of equality and mutual reinforcement, taking into account the differing characteristics of regional organizations in terms of membership, resource availability and institutional capacity, as well as the uniqueness of each conflict situation.

Regional organizations, particularly those in Africa, should be able to count on political, financial and logistical support from the United Nations in actions they initiate to resolve conflicts in their regions. On the same note, regional organizations should maintain closer contacts with the Security Council in order to provide the Council with timely and comprehensive updates on their undertakings. In that connection, Viet Nam welcomes the important contribution towards achieving these goals made through the Secretary-General's regular high-level meetings with the leadership of regional organizations and looks forward to his upcoming report offering specific proposals on how the United Nations can better support arrangements for further cooperation and coordination with regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Since its inception in 1967, ASEAN has concluded many initiatives which significantly contribute to peace, security and stability in the region. Those include the declaration of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in South-East Asia, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord, the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and the Declaration of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, as well as regional actions undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations with regard to Timor-Leste and Myanmar.

The establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN+3 process — ASEAN plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea — have helped expand regional capacity in dealing with some traditional and non-traditional security challenges, including counter-terrorism and combating transnational crime. ASEAN has also attached great importance to fostering consultations, exchanging experiences and best practices with other regional and subregional organizations in Asia, Europe and Latin America and promoting multilateral endeavours for peace, stability and development.

My country notes with satisfaction that ASEAN has very recently been granted observer status in the General Assembly and has signed an ASEAN-United Nations cooperation agreement. We believe that there is great potential for expanding cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN. It is also our sincere hope that the multifaceted relationship between the two organizations will continue to achieve steady progress in all areas of common interest and concern.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Solomon Islands.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands): First of all my delegation would like to sincerely congratulate you, Sir, and your delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Council and to thank you for convening an open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. This is consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter — as has been said by previous speakers— and recognizes the role of regional and subregional security arrangements in preserving international peace. The changing international climate, with shifts by the bigger Powers in the international system, has had an impact upon and has redefined all security mechanisms globally, at both the regional and the international levels.

My delegation is pleased that the presidency has taken the initiative in reaching out to the wider membership to discuss this important issue. This debate allows us not only to review but to appraise how secure the world has become with the contributions from regional and subregional mechanisms. It further permits us to draw the Council's attention to some of the challenges confronting subregional and regional mechanisms in preserving international peace and security and to see how these can best be addressed, given the role and purpose of the Council. In saying that, my delegation recognizes that different regions have their own particularities and realities.

One of the glaring gaps my delegation has identified on the issue is the lack of observance of Article 54 of the Charter. The Article underlines the requirement that the Council be kept fully informed on all activities under regional and subregional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace. At the moment, some regions have received more attention than others. This presents an institutional gap that could be accommodated within the working methods of the Council by having periodic reports presented to the Council, by the Secretariat and the States concerned, on all regional and subregional security mechanisms. That could be done on a six-monthly basis or quarterly.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) also supports that proposal and calls for a formalized agreement between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations and involvement of such organizations in the work of the Security Council. This is in addition to strengthening United Nations and regional and subregional cooperation in the economic, social and cultural fields. In other words there needs to be some movement beyond the holding of biannual consultations between regional organizations and the Secretary-General. On this note, if there is a draft memorandum of understanding, Solomon Islands will be happy to take this through its regional process in trying to formalize relations with the United Nations.

Solomon Islands is a post-conflict country and particularly welcomes this occasion as a recipient of an ongoing subregional security arrangement. This occasion presents an opportunity to put the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands on the Council's radar screen with its successes and challenges.

The maintenance of international peace and security at the regional level is a financially expensive exercise and is, therefore, driven by those with resources. The subregion my delegation hails from has, within its membership, two industrialized members among many small island developing States. This has allowed for a active regional cooperation mechanism. The issue with regional mechanisms is that, if they are not properly managed or are unbalanced in their approach, regional organizations could address symptoms rather than the causes of conflicts. Differences could occur between the recipient State and the regional organization. It is important that the regional organizations working to maintain regional stability do so in strong partnership with the recipient country while being flexible regarding the changing security, economic and social climate. It must be a partnership and must take a participatory form, so as to ensure that the ownership and leadership of the peace and nation-building processes are country-led and country-driven. Decisions to use public, as well as quiet diplomacy, are also important.

The absence of such a balance will expose the receiving State to the dangers of slipping back into a conflict situation. Security and development are two sides of the same coin and can only instil real peace if applied simultaneously. The economic and development needs of the country tend to be overlooked, with the issues of the rule of law, democracy and governance receiving more emphasis in the cooperative effort. Solomon Islands, a least developed country, is off track in terms of meeting its Millennium Development Goals and is in a vulnerable position, as its development needs are not receiving the necessary attention. In this regard, enhanced cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations is crucial in order to address the concerns of all parties, ensuring that security and development cooperation remains on track. This is based on the understanding that, in many of today's conflicts, regional organizations have gone further into countries than our multilateral institution would have and have, therefore, accumulated acquired both positive and negative experiences.

The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, led by Australia and strongly supported by New Zealand and my fellow Pacific Islands small island developing States, is in its fourth year in the Solomon Islands. It comprises military, police and civil-servant support, all rolled into one. It has been successful in its mission; however, like anything new, it has its strengths and weaknesses and faces certain challenges. Regional mechanisms, being external actors, do face challenges in aligning their efforts with the national, political and economic realities they seek to support and need to be refined and adapted to the changing climates in which they operate.

It is in this spirit, this past month at the annual Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting, it was noted that the Solomon Islands had decided to review the 2003 Facilitation of International Assistance Act. The review will seek to increase the partnership between the receiving State, Solomon Islands and the Regional Mission. Solomon Islands would like to see a strengthened United Nations Security Council mechanism, so as to ensure that no problem issues are allowed to aggravate but will be confronted with international attention, where necessary. After all, the centrality of the Security Council must be preserved and protected.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner-Klée (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to thank the delegation of Indonesia for having organized this open debate, which allows the countries that are not members of the Council to express our points of view on this very important topic. I would also like to thank that same delegation for the very clear reference document that was distributed to all of the delegations. It is also an honour and a privilege to see our friend, Hassan Wirajuda, Minister for Foreign Affairs, presiding over this meeting.

We are aware of the fact that the more complex the challenges of our globalized world, the more crucial it is to have the partnership and pooling of efforts between our respective organizations in order to achieve a security that is authentically collective, effective and equitable for all. The maintenance of international peace is the most powerful and practical proof of our commitment to collective security. The association in this area between the United Nations and regional organizations has become crucial for the success of our common efforts.

The partnership between the United Nations and the regional organizations is today stronger than it was during the early 1990s. Many of the very regional and subregional organizations are much more robust, and, therefore, interaction with them is more intensive, substantial and significant. In recent years, political and operational cooperation has included, to mention a few examples: cooperation with the hybrid peacekeeping operation with the African Union in Darfur, with the European Union in support of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, continued partnerships with Economic Community of West African States, and cooperation with NATO in Afghanistan and Kosovo and with the Organization of American States in Haiti.

Those are a few examples of the range of policies and operational activities that have been carried out in recent years. Therefore, we think that the United Nations today already has a better idea of the scope, magnitude, advantages and disadvantages of this cooperation. Thus, the knowledge of given situations is improving, thanks to the political contributions of regional actors. Their military and peacekeeping capabilities have made it possible to respond more rapidly, when a crisis breaks out, as well as during decisive moments. Their resources are crucial for peacebuilding in the post-conflict stage.

Nonetheless, despite these definitely positive events, for this relationship to be more substantive and effective, we still have to resolve many outstanding problems. As we have said in previous debates, although Chapter VIII of the Charter refers to regional arrangements and bodies and establishes its functional relationship with the Security Council, there is nothing said about the constitutional relationship of such arrangements with the Security Council. We think it crucial that there be greater clarity on a series of questions, which would facilitate the creation of a global and regional mechanism for peace and security, agreed to by the Security Council as well as by regional organizations, as recommended by the former Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his report of July 2006.

In the Western Hemisphere, an example of successful cooperation has been the case of Haiti, where the Organization of American States has established a valuable strategic partnership with the United Nations. This has facilitated the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), whose main military and civilian component is Latin American, thanks to the leadership and experience acquired in the preparation of Haiti's elections.

The heads of State and Government of the member States of the Central American Integration System (SICA) have pointed out the importance for the whole region of the democratic process in Haiti. They have since urged MINUSTAH, in its continuing presence, to consolidate that process and offered their assistance to it.

It is important for regional and subregional authorities to develop their own mechanisms. In the subregional sphere, the member countries of SICA and Mexico are working on a Mexican and Central American security strategy, which, from a comprehensive perspective, seeks to guide the coordinated security actions adopted by the countries of the region into their respective legal frameworks. The specific objectives of this strategy are: harmonization of the different efforts in the region in the area of security so as to achieve better results; facilitating coordination, the exchange of information and experience between the various operational agencies and authorities in the region so as to more effectively combat regional crime; and identifying and managing the financial needs, in addition to the resource and training needs, required by security institutions. In short, combating organized crime and drug trafficking, strengthening information exchange mechanisms and combating the illegal arms trade and terrorism are priority areas in the strategy.

With regard to the final point — relating to peacekeeping — in paragraph 14 of the concept paper for this debate (S/2007/640, annex), we believe, first of all, that a single hybrid model cannot always be applicable to all conflicts and regions. Past experience has shown us that conflicts must be assessed and managed on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, we believe that this issue should also be discussed in depth within the framework of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

Today, more than ever before, regional organizations must play a crucial role not only in conflict prevention and resolution, but also in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The geographic proximity of their members and the close historical and cultural ties among them give regional organizations comparative advantages in better understanding the root causes of regional conflicts, and thus in finding peaceful solutions to those problems.

As for how we can encourage broader participation by regional organizations in United Nations peacekeeping efforts, we propose that, when they are on a special Security Council mission, Council members try to meet with representatives of regional organizations. Furthermore, provision should be made for representatives of regional organizations to inform the Security Council about their activities.

The Peacebuilding Commission now plays a key role in the United Nations system in defining peacebuilding strategies for countries emerging from conflict and in improving coordination. Close collaboration with regional organizations and the participation of civil society in peacebuilding will be important contributions to the Commission's success.

In conclusion, I should like to express our full support for all efforts to enhance the capacity of regional and other organizations. If the United Nations and its Member States really want to develop an effective partnership, they should promote the capacities of such organizations by providing them with technical, financial and human assistance.

The President: I now call on the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Norway supports the Security Council in its efforts to promote closer and more comprehensive cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We are actively engaged in such efforts through the United Nations, as well as through many regional and subregional organizations. Particular mention should be made of the African Union (AU), which has taken on increasing responsibility for peace and security on the African continent.

To encourage more comprehensive engagement on the part of regional organizations, we must replace old habits and institutional protectionism with an open and flexible approach adapted to the particular situation at hand. Our experience with the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) in Darfur, where the European Union (EU) and NATO provide crucial support to the AU, shows just how important that is.

One lesson learned from AMIS is that cooperation in the field paves the way for strengthened mutual engagement. The EU is on its way to Chad and the Central African Republic to provide military support to the United Nations operation there. NATO has signalled its willingness to provide strategic airlift capabilities in support of the AU mission in Somalia. NATO will also favourably consider a request to assist the AU in building peacekeeping capacity. Such cooperation builds confidence and makes more comprehensive engagement possible.

Right now, the United Nations and the AU are engaged in a joint endeavour to establish one of the largest United Nations peace operations ever: the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The political process led to the establishment of the Hybrid Operation, thus ensuring its predominantly African character. The hybrid model of UNAMID provides a new model for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Much is expected of the hybrid model. Its success will be measured by its impact on the ground and by its ability to make efficient cooperation possible between the United Nations and the AU. While it is too early to assess the hybrid model, our experiences with UNAMID will enable us to develop and improve cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

UNAMID's success will depend not only on the cooperation between the United Nations and the AU within the mission, but also on UNAMID's relations with the United Nations Mission in the Sudan and with the new mission that is to be established in Chad and the Central African Republic.

UNAMID is more than just a joint peacekeeping operation; it joins the efforts and experiences of two organizations under Mr. Rodolphe Adada, Joint United Nations-African Union Special Representative for Darfur. For both organizations, that may prove to be a strength as well as a challenge. The United Nations has institutional experience with peacekeeping operations, while the AU has regional anchoring and is still in the process of establishing its peace-operation capacities.

I would like to commend the AU for its efforts to develop peacekeeping capacity, while at the same time taking on very demanding operational responsibilities both in Darfur and in Somalia. Norway will continue to assist the AU in developing the civilian dimension of the African standby force through the Training for Peace programme, which trains African police and civilian experts for African peace-support missions.

If any operation is to succeed, there must be a clear chain of command. The United Nations and the AU must work together. The United Nations-African Union joint coordination and support mechanism in Addis Ababa will have a key function in that regard. These organizational complexities are just part of the setting. Ultimately, UNAMID's success will hinge upon the outcome of the peace talks between the Government of the Sudan and the rebel groups. In that regard, it is probably an advantage that those talks are being led jointly by the United Nations and the AU.

Norway stands ready to support both the United Nations and the AU in their important endeavour. We are prepared to contribute both military and police personnel to UNAMID. We are already contributing financial and human resources to the Darfur peace talks. UNAMID's ability to fulfil its mandate — and to provide security for civilians and to protect humanitarian operations — will shape future cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Ali (Malaysia): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. Minister, and Indonesia on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. We are pleased to see you preside over this principal organ of the United

Nations, which has primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. We also wish to express our appreciation to you for convening this open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe that that is a most relevant topic for discussion by the Council, in the light of the many challenges confronting various regions and the role that regional and subregional organizations could play in maintaining peace and security in those regions.

Indeed, regional and subregional organizations could contribute constructively to the work of the Security Council in ensuring the prevalence of peace and security in particular regions, particularly in light of the ever-increasing demands placed upon the resources of the United Nations and the complexities of global politics. We share the view of former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, that

> "regional action as a matter of decentralization, delegation and cooperation with United Nations efforts could not only lighten the burden on the Council but also contribute to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in international affairs". (*S/24111, para. 64*)

It is evident that the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security through the peaceful settlement of disputes is recognized by the United Nations, pursuant to Chapter VIII of its Charter. We are beginning to witness an increased role played by regional organizations such as the African Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in countries facing conflict in their respective regions. Without prejudice to the capability and effectiveness of the United Nations, regional arrangements should be seen as a complement to the Organization's mediation and conflict resolution approaches, as regional and subregional organizations generally have a better understanding of the interplay of local and regional dynamics.

The countries of South-East Asia, including Malaysia, are familiar with the effectiveness of regional arrangements in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security. Although founded initially as a regional grouping focusing on economic, social and cultural cooperation, ASEAN has progressively evolved towards achieving regional solidarity and that has contributed to peace and stability in the region.

The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, to which all ASEAN members adhere, enshrines the principles of mutual respect for one another's sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, the peaceful settlement of intraregional disputes and effective cooperation among its signatories. It states that ASEAN political and security dialogue and cooperation should aim to promote regional peace and stability by enhancing regional resilience, and that this resilience shall be achieved through cooperation in all fields among its member States. Through political dialogue and confidence-building, ASEAN has well managed the occasional bilateral tensions and conflicts among its members.

Malaysia maintains the importance of adhering to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, particularly in the context of inter-State relations. The so-called constructive intervention policy advocated by some, involving loud criticism, adversarial posturing and grandstanding, would only bring more harm than good to the promotion of neighbourly relations. We are in favour of engaging other countries in the region in a dialogue on peace and security and in implementing confidence-building measures. In this regard, the ASEAN Regional Forum has served as a useful basis for gathering all concerned parties in the region through a process of dialogue on issues related to regional peace and security. The objectives of the ARF are to foster constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern and to contribute to efforts towards confidence building and preventive diplomacy.

Too often, the international community still takes a reactionary and knee-jerk approach and is preoccupied with the symptoms and consequences of conflicts rather than addressing their root causes. Learning from the lessons of other regional conflicts, ASEAN has taken a more proactive and preventive approach by investing seriously in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. As conflicts are more often than not sparked by competition for limited economic resources, ASEAN's approach towards subregional peace and security has been one of cooperation in the economic, social and cultural fields for the mutual benefit of all of its members. The peace, security and stability that ASEAN has helped to maintain in South-East Asia have been conducive to development, creating a political environment where rapid and sustained economic growth has become possible. Economic development in turn has brought about social progress and human development in the region.

Malaysia believes that a strong and successful ASEAN is not only an economic necessity but also a strategic imperative. A prosperous, consolidated and stable ASEAN, at peace with itself and with its immediate neighbours, provides the best guarantee for the security of the entire South-East and East Asian regions. Malaysia will continue to push for the strengthening of ASEAN as a regional grouping. We believe that the existence of ASEAN has encouraged patterns of behaviour that reduce risks to security by enhancing bilateral relations and by fostering habits of open dialogue on political and security matters.

In conclusion, Malaysia wishes to reaffirm our belief that regional and subregional organizations have an important role to play in the maintenance of peace and security at the regional level, and that they complement the work of the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore, who will speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Mr. Menon (Singapore): I am making this statement of the 10 Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Let me add that we are extremely pleased to see a fellow ASEAN member presiding over the Security Council.

The end of the cold war marked the end of an era where global conflicts were seen through the prism of only two lenses. Today, we live in a more complex and interconnected world, where there are many new actors on the international stage and more variables and alignments to consider. While the threat of global war has receded, smaller conflicts that are often asymmetric, low-intensity and diffuse have proliferated. It has become a messier world.

This situation presents new challenges to global peace and security. Obviously, the United Nations and the major Powers have a crucial role to play. But in a globalized world, regional cooperation can also play a key role. Indeed, even the Charter of the United Nations recognizes the role that regional arrangements can play in helping the United Nations to achieve its objectives.

All over the world today, regional initiatives are proliferating. Some are modest in their objectives, providing forums to meet and consult. Others are more ambitious. They discuss security or create free trade areas. They foster joint efforts against problems like drug trafficking and terrorism. Many of these regional initiatives are open and inclusive and should be encouraged to remain that way. Those which are superfluous will gradually wither away. International organizations like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations Environment Programme should work with those that remain, strengthening their capabilities and encouraging mutual learning. At their best, these regional initiatives create a habit of cooperation and reduce misunderstanding.

ASEAN has played this role. The year 2007 is special because it marks 40 years of unity. ASEAN has come a long way since it was established by the Bangkok Declaration of 1967. Against the backdrop of the cold war, and with regional disputes still fresh in memory, ASEAN began with the modest aim of keeping the peace in South-East Asia. It was a mechanism for member countries to manage common threats, while balancing internal sensitivities and conflicts. In short, ASEAN was born out of the strategic imperatives of its times. With the end of the cold war, peace returned to Indochina and ASEAN gradually expanded to include the newer member States of Viet Nam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia, to become a community of ten.

ASEAN has been working to establish a norm of cooperation and dialogue among its members. Economic cooperation was always a key point. In 1992, ASEAN decided to establish a free trade area in stages. We have largely achieved that goal with respect to trade in goods. For investments and services, we still have some way to go. But there is the will to press on and transform ASEAN into one economic space.

Four years ago, when the leaders of ASEAN met in Indonesia, they took a major decision to establish an ASEAN community by 2020 with three main areas as its pillars — security, economic and socio-cultural. Earlier this year, the leaders further agreed to accelerate the establishment of the ASEAN community by 2015. To create such a community, an ASEAN charter will be signed later this month in Singapore to provide a legal framework document for the further strengthening of ASEAN. It will help remake ASEAN into a more effective, cohesive and rules-based organization, through, for instance, establishing provisions for dispute settlement by independent panels. Blueprints for each of the three pillars of the ASEAN community will also map out concrete initiatives, targets and timelines to achieve this goal. The first such blueprint — for the economic pillar — will be adopted later this month.

ASEAN has also been active in engaging the external environment. For ASEAN to prosper, we have always recognized the importance of maintaining good relations with all the major Powers in the region. ASEAN has dialogue partnerships with the United States, the European Union, Russia, China, Japan, Korea, India, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. ASEAN has been playing a bridging role of sorts. It is the driving force behind the creation of such key regional groupings as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN+3 and the East Asia Summit. The ARF is the main security forum in the Asia-Pacific region, bringing together 27 participating countries and entities including ASEAN, the United States, the European Union, Russia, China and India.

Through its many confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy activities, the ARF has contributed to the stability and security in the region. Economically, ASEAN has negotiated, or is in the process of negotiating, free trade agreements with China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand and with the EU, and a closer economic partnership with the Unites States. We have a simple strategy, which is to give all of them a strong stake in our regional stability, unity and development. Strategically, some of the most important sea lanes pass through ASEAN waters. About a third of global trade, half of the global oil trade and 80 per cent of the oil bound for China and Japan pass through the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

Through the ASEAN-plus groupings and the East Asia Summit, which includes Australia, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and New Zealand, we are creating a new architecture of peaceful cooperative development in the larger East Asia. The East Asia Summit process is maturing into an important regional forum that is progressing beyond dialogue into concrete cooperation. Let me stress that, while ASEAN is not big enough to be a major global player, it plays a significant role in holding Asia together and keeping it open to the rest of the world. ASEAN is outward-looking and inclusive, and through its various external linkages seeks to engage all who have a stake in the region's future.

ASEAN is a work in process. Like other regions in the world, we face many problems: economic development, terrorism, drug trafficking, environmental degradation, maritime security, ethnic and religious divisions and avian flu, among others. However, what each of us in ASEAN has come to appreciate is that, without ASEAN, each of these problems would be much harder to solve. And ASEAN alone cannot solve any of them. We have to work with other countries and with international organizations like the United Nations. We are grateful for their assistance, their partnership and their cooperation.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Honduras.

Mr. Romero-Martínez (Honduras) *(spoke in Spanish)*: My delegation, Sir, joins others in congratulating your delegation on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and, today, on having organized this important debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The delegation of Honduras attaches great importance to this topic, whose discussion will strengthen the activities of the Organization. Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter establishes the parameters for cooperation and recognizes the existence of agreements with regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

In its resolution 1631 (2005), the Security Council clearly stated its determination to take appropriate steps to further the development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, consistent with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. Furthermore, it invited regional and subregional organizations that have a capacity for conflict prevention or peacekeeping to place such capacities in the framework of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System.

And, in its presidential statement of 28 March (S/PRST/2007/7), the Council wisely recognized that regional organizations are well positioned to understand the root causes of many conflicts closer to home and to influence the prevention or resolution, owing to their knowledge of the region.

My delegation acknowledges the progress that has been made in this area and firmly believes that strengthening these contacts, meetings and efforts will benefit international peace and security.

In our region, this has yielded positive results, demonstrating that interaction among all actors promotes a climate of trust and cooperation, leading to the possible resolution of conflicts.

We appreciate the role played by the European Union in Europe and other regions, the African Union in Africa, the League of Arab States in the Middle East, the Organization of American States in the Americas and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Asia. We can certainly add subregional actors as well, such as the Central American Integration System, which contribute to the creation of a climate of integration and collective cooperation. My delegation believes that appropriate breadth in our objectives and a more active inclusion of non-governmental organizations and of civil society are necessary.

We view type of debate as imperative. It allows us to reassess the role of our Organization and, above all, as the Charter tells us, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We thank you very much, Mr. President, for this initiative.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Benin.

Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) *(spoke in French)*: On behalf of the Benin delegation, Mr. Minister, allow me to offer you my heartfelt congratulations on Indonesia's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to welcome your initiative to convene this public debate. Your presence among us and your personal contribution enhance the level of this debate. I would also like to pay a well-deserved tribute to the delegation of Ghana, which held the presidency of the Security Council in October.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the Republic of Angola on behalf of the African Group.

The theme of this public debate is extremely relevant. Regional and subregional organizations have a major role to play in the collective security system established by the United Nations Charter. Here, the provisions of Chapter VIII are explicit.

In that regard, remarkable progress has been made in the process of restructuring mechanism for conflict prevention and settlement in Africa. The international community, which, through the Security Council, has the core responsibility for world peace and security, can rely upon a continent-wide machinery that continues to be honed through the establishment and articulation of mechanisms which are often established spontaneously, but which have become relevant within the integration process embodied by the African Union and by its development programme, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). This trend towards pooling energies and resources is part of the Charter vision for a collective security system that harmoniously encompasses the regional and international levels.

We welcome the recognition of the importance of the capacities of regional and subregional organizations, particularly with respect to the establishment of mechanisms and rules of conduct that make it possible to better manage critical situations through more effective action on the ground based on a rapid response to warning signs in order to contain the tensions and the risks of rapid escalation, while benefiting from complementarities.

This evolution calls for a review of the doctrine of peacekeeping operations as it has been understood until now. The international community has had to make up for the absence or weakness of intervention capacities at the regional level. Henceforth, the primary responsibility of the Security Council for international peace and security will need to be carried out with the involvement of existing local capacities, through standby force arrangements, and this was clearly reaffirmed in Security Council resolution 1631 and was stipulated by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU).

In that connection, the establishment of hybrid operations represents a transitional phase prior to setting up fully operational regional capacities. In that regard, the international community has a duty to strengthen the process of setting up regional capacities in order to fully delegate its operational responsibilities to regions while maintaining the overall authority to mandate operations, so as to avoid fragmentation of the rules governing the exercise of that authority.

It is therefore important that the United Nations follows the processes under way very closely to ensure that they are carried out in strict compliance with the Charter and that they can produce synergies to meet the challenges confronting regions in the maintenance of international peace and security, especially with regard to the root causes of conflict, and to mobilize human resources and the means necessary to ensure the functioning of regional mechanisms as an integral part of the collective system of security.

Having said that, development is another name for peace — something that is especially true for the African continent. From that point of view, support for regional and subregional organizations should also be aimed at promoting their mission of economic integration. Thus they could increase their contribution to sustainable development in countries where they are active. That entails providing assistance in establishing major agglomerations of States that are capable of mobilizing efforts to ensure prosperity based on economies of scale, as well as full inclusion of individuals and State bodies set up to bring an end to widespread poverty among entire groups of the population who have been plunged into extreme poverty by the distortions of the global economic system.

In that connection, my delegation calls for better cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, so as to ensure greater effectiveness in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts through existing mechanisms or those to be established.

Regional and subregional organizations must assume their full place in the system of collective security established by the Charter, without encroaching upon or diminishing the primary responsibilities of the Security Council. We must continually differentiate between the Council's decision-making power to define mandates and exercise oversight over their implementation, on the one hand, and the greatest possible operational capacities that regional organizations are able to assume, on the other. The goal is to ensure greater effectiveness by the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. That goal should be pursued through a holistic approach that encompasses all aspects with a specific impact on that area. The full integration of regional mechanisms should include better structuring of the global economy, in order to provide all countries with an opportunity to achieve peaceful development within an international system that operates in the interests of humankind and for the betterment of its capacities.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Pramudwinai (Thailand): Regional cooperation has always been at the heart of Thailand's foreign policy. That is why we take pleasure today in joining this open debate of the Security Council on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

We wish to congratulate Indonesia, a fellow family member in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), on its assumption of the presidency of the Council and for initiating and organizing this vital and timely debate.

We would also like to associate ourselves with the statements made earlier by my other ASEAN colleagues, including of course the representative of Singapore, who spoke in that country's capacity as Chair of ASEAN.

The founders of the United Nations foresaw the indispensable role of regional and subregional organizations in the pursuit of the purposes and principles of multilateralism that are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. That wisdom is clearly reflected in Chapter VIII of the Charter. We hold that wisdom to be more pertinent than ever in this increasingly complex and interdependent world.

Thailand has consistently advocated for closer regional integration in South-East Asia for decades, starting with an arrangement such as the former Association of South-East Asia, which later evolved into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Since its establishment, in 1967, with the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration, ASEAN has been a cornerstone of Thai foreign policy, and will continue to be so in the future. It is on the basis of being a founding member of

ASEAN, and out of a sense of ownership in that organization, that my delegation would like to share with the Council its views in four areas, with ASEAN as its focus.

First, regionalism can turn enmity into amity by managing differences and emphasizing commonalities. That is most evident in South Asia. Before the establishment of ASEAN, in 1967, South Asia was a zone of disputes and conflicts. Today, South Asia has transformed itself into a zone of relative peace and stability. With that peace and stability, South Asia has emerged as one of the fastest growing regions in the world. The peace, stability and prosperity that all of us in the region cherish would not be possible without ASEAN as an anchor and a common framework for working together.

Thailand believes that ASEAN has a lot to offer to the international community, not least its working methods and its gradual institution-building processes. For example, the ASEAN culture of sincere consultation and consensus-making — the so-called ASEAN way — has been instrumental in ensuring the collective growth and cohesiveness of all its diverse members.

ASEAN's approach towards the subject of peace and security is most notable. While the United Nations prides itself of its 60 years without a great war, ASEAN is also proud of its 40 years of the absence of major conflicts among its members. As a confidence-building process, ASEAN members have been strong practitioners of a comprehensive security that does not focus solely on the military aspect of security but emphasizes common challenges in the area of economic cooperation. Through closer economic linkages comes the realization of a common stake in joint prosperity, which ultimately underpins common peace and security.

Secondly, for each regional organization to flourish and be sustainable, it is vital that a sense of community is cultivated and nurtured among its members. It is in this spirit that Thailand has been a strong advocate of the ASEAN community-building process. We believe that it is important for ASEAN members to spare no effort to develop a sense of community and a "we" and "us" feeling in the region — a mutual sentiment that will propel the region to look to the future together as one community.

In that conviction, we are pleased that the 10 members of the ASEAN family, including Thailand, will celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the organization by adopting the ASEAN Charter, which will pave the way for a closer and stronger ASEAN with a great advantage. By signing the Charter, every ASEAN member will be committed to transforming the organization into a rules-based organization based on the three pillars of the ASEAN security community, the ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN socio-economic community, thus taking a vital step forward in the regional integration process. Thailand strongly believes that a stronger ASEAN will be an effective partner of the international community in the pursuit of international peace and security.

Thirdly, no region is an island onto itself in this interconnected world. ASEAN therefore needs to engage and work with other regional partners on the basis of mutual benefits. It is upon that realization that Thailand has consistently supported an outward-looking ASEAN through such initiatives as ASEAN+3, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN post-ministerial conferences and the East Asia Summit. Through that network of regional cooperative arrangements, ASEAN has successfully played a central role in managing regional differences in the larger Asia-Pacific peace and stability architecture, and has been instrumental in cultivating a culture of dialogue and consensus among its diverse players.

But the horizon of ASEAN is not limited to Asia and the Pacific. In this interconnected world, many problems are transnational in nature and require concerted efforts not only within each region, but also between regions. As peace and security could well be augmented through cross-regional cooperation, Thailand has been a staunch supporter of interregional efforts. We have played a central role in establishing the Asia-Europe Meeting and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, which to date is the only Asia-wide cooperative framework. Thailand, along with our fellow ASEAN members, has also been actively participating in the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation and has been promoting closer cooperation between ASEAN and the African Union, and between ASEAN and the Gulf Cooperation Council, for example. All those cooperative arrangements, when put together, constitute building blocks for the stronger and more effective multilateralism that the United Nations embodies.

Fourthly, greater capacity is needed to ensure that each and every regional arrangement can bring out its best potential. The United Nations has a vital role to play in that regard. Thailand would also like to see the United Nations placing greater emphasis on encouraging and strengthening those burgeoning subregional, regional and cross-regional building blocks. There is much that each region can learn from the others and there is much that, together, cross-regional efforts could contribute to the enhancement of peace and stability in respective regions. As an observer to the United Nations, ASEAN has made clear our intention to bring our cooperation with the United Nations to a higher level.

As a founding member of the ASEAN family, Thailand is cognizant of the collective responsibility of the family and the common challenges it is facing in the integration process in this interdependent world. Like all other regional organizations, there is no other way for ASEAN to head but up. A strong, healthy and united ASEAN, with the firm determination to strive forward and a reasonably profound optimism, is essential to the maintenance of peace and security not only in the region, but also in the world at large.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Azerbaijan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mammadov (Azerbaijan), took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I call on the representative of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mammadov (Azerbaijan): I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to the delegation of Indonesia and Foreign Minister Wirayuda for convening today's open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations has recently increased significantly. The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the European Union's contribution to the protection of civilians in Chad and the Central African Republic, the activities of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in Myanmar, the role of the Economic Community of West African States in elections in West Africa, NATO in Afghanistan and Kosovo, the Organization of American States' support for the electoral process in Haiti, and regular consultations with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, as well as with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union, on European security are examples of such broad and comprehensive cooperation.

The Secretary-General stated in today's meeting that the United Nations is committed to helping build up the capacities of regional and subregional organizations to undertake conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacekeeping tasks in their respective regions. That approach would reinforce and mutually complement the activities of the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the OSCE, in maintaining international peace and security, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

With that in mind, and with the aim of giving new impetus to the peace process and facilitate the final settlement of certain conflicts on the OSCE agenda, the United Nations may and should consider those conflicts. That is not to say that we seek a substitute for the peace process; rather, we seek to provide encouragement and support for the ongoing mediation efforts conducted by the OSCE. We believe that the consideration of those conflicts by the United Nations and its General Assembly will have a positive impact on the existing negotiations and reveal the determination of the international community, in particular the United Nations, to continue to take practical steps to settle those conflicts. Any settlement will have to be based on the norms and principles of international law.

Another OSCE dimension that needs to be mentioned here is the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. As a result of occupation, some parts of our State territory are beyond the Government's control, which has led to the establishment of so-called black holes, where a significant amount of CFE Treaty-limited conventional armaments has been deployed and cannot be accounted for under the Treaty. That is in gross violation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, to our great concern.

All of those problems reconfirm that there is still room for an expansion and deepening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We are ready to contribute, within our capacities, to that process.

The President: Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.
>
> "The Security Council recognizes the important role of regional and subregional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations as well as its relevant resolutions, in particular resolutions 1625 (2005) and 1631 (2005), and previous relevant presidential statements on cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.
>
> "The Security Council emphasizes that the growing contribution made by regional and subregional organizations in cooperation with the United Nations can usefully support the work of the Organization in maintaining international peace and security, and stresses in this regard that such contribution should be made in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.
>
> "The Security Council further recognizes that regional and subregional organizations are well positioned to understand the root causes of many conflicts and other security challenges close to home and to influence their prevention or resolution, owing to their knowledge of the region.
>
> "The Security Council recalls its determination to take appropriate steps to further the development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. It welcomes recent developments with regard to the cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union.
>
> "The Security Council, while maintaining the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, encourages regional and subregional organizations to strengthen and increase cooperation among them, including to enhance their respective capacity, in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council underlines the importance of the United Nations political support and technical expertise in this regard.
>
> "The Security Council encourages regional cooperation, including through the involvement of regional and subregional organizations in the peaceful settlement of disputes, and intends to consult closely with them whenever appropriate on their role in future peacekeeping operations as well as political and integrated missions authorized by the Security Council.
>
> "The Security Council stresses the need to develop effective partnership between the Council and regional and subregional organizations in order to enable early response to disputes and emerging crises.
>
> "The Security Council underlines the importance of exploring the potential and existing capacities of regional and subregional organizations in the field of peace and security, covering, inter alia, the spectrum of conflict prevention, confidence-building, conflict resolution, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding, and welcomes regional dialogue and the promotion of shared norms as well as common regional approaches to the settlement of disputes and other issues relating to peace and security.
>
> "The Security Council stresses the potential role of regional and subregional organizations in addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and the need to take into account in the peacekeeping operations' mandates, where appropriate, the regional instruments enabling States to identify and trace illegal small arms and light weapons.

"The Security Council welcomes the efforts undertaken by its subsidiary bodies with responsibilities in counter-terrorism to foster cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, notes with appreciation the efforts made by an increasing number of regional and subregional organizations in countering terrorism and urges all relevant regional and subregional organizations to enhance the effectiveness of their counter-terrorism efforts within their respective mandates and in accordance with international law, including with a view to develop their capacity to help Member States in their efforts to tackle the threats to international peace and security posed by acts of terrorism.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of promoting the identification and further development of modalities which enhance the contribution of regional and subregional organizations to the work of the Council in maintaining international peace and security in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. For that purpose, the Council deems it useful to consider further strengthening its interaction and cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council recognizes the Peacebuilding Commission, in its area of competence, as a forum for coordination in the area of post-conflict between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with its resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to include in his report pursuant to its presidential statement of 28 March 2007 (S/PRST/2007/7) a recommendation on practical ways and means to increase and strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

"The Security Council invites all Member States to contribute more actively to the strengthening of the capacity of regional and subregional organizations in all parts of the world, in issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/42.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5777

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5777th meeting

Tuesday, 13 November 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Natalegawa	(Indonesia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Qahtani
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad

Agenda

The situation in Myanmar

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Myanmar

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Japan, Myanmar and Singapore, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Swe (Myanmar) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Takasu (Japan) and Mr. Menon (Singapore) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Gambari: I am grateful for this opportunity to brief the Security Council soon after my most recent visit to Myanmar, from 3 to 8 November, which was undertaken on behalf of the Secretary-General in the context of his good offices mandate.

At the outset, I wish to thank the Government of Myanmar for having brought forward my visit to the first week of November. As members of the Council know, this mission followed closely my visit at the height of the recent crisis in late September to early October. The main focus of my mission was thus to follow up on and facilitate, where possible, the implementation of immediate and medium- to long-term recommendations made during my previous visit to address the serious concerns arising from the crisis.

As was the case last time, the authorities organized my programme in such a way that most of my meetings were held in Nay Pyi Taw, the new capital, except for the afternoon of the last day, which was spent in Yangon. Although it was not possible this time to meet with Senior General Than Shwe, arrangements were made for me to meet with the new Prime Minister, General Thein Sein, with whom I left a letter from the Secretary-General, which was addressed to the Senior General. In addition to the Prime Minister, I met with all the relevant members of the Government, including the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Information, Culture and Labour, both as members of the Authoritative Team of the State Peace and Development Council and as members of the newly established Constitutional Drafting Committee. I also held separate meetings with the Minister of Labour in his capacity as the newly appointed Minister for Relations with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as with the Foreign Minister, the Planning Minister and the Minister for Religious Affairs.

I met also with the new Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council, Lieutenant General Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo. Although I regret that it was not possible to meet with all the interlocutors that I requested to meet, such as representatives of the 88 Generation Students, Members of Parliament elected in 1990, monks and detainees, the Government organized for me to meet with civil society groups, including the Union Solidarity and Development Association, the Women's Federation of Myanmar, the Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and the National Red Cross Society, as well as with political parties, including the National League for Democracy (NLD), the National Union Party and the National Pao' People Party. The Government also invited the diplomatic corps to meet me in Nay Pyi Taw. In Yangon, I was received by the Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Committee, and I was able to meet with the United Nations country team, on United Nations premises, as well as with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi herself.

As members of the Council are aware, my visit to Myanmar followed a statement from the President of the General Assembly on 5 October and the adoption of a Security Council presidential statement on 11 October (S/PRST/2007/37), both of which expressed strong support for the Secretary-General's good offices role and for my own efforts on his behalf, and called on the Government of Myanmar to continue to cooperate with the United Nations.

It is also important to remind ourselves of the initial positive steps taken by the Government since my last visit. At our suggestion, the Government already lifted the curfews put in place during the demonstrations, withdrew all visible military presence from the streets, and, by its own account, released over 2,700 persons detained in the course of the demonstrations, including some 700 monks, as well as political detainees, including prominent activists and some 50 members of the NLD, Aung San Suu Kyi's party. Importantly, the Government appointed on 8 October Labour Minister Major-General Aung Kyi as Minister for Relations with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and a first meeting between them took place on 25 October. The Government also appointed a 54-member Constitutional Drafting Committee that has yet to be convened as a whole. Finally, the Government agreed to receive the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Myanmar, Mr. Paolo Pinheiro, who is currently in the country, and the Government also agreed in principle to receive a delegation from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

At the same time, however, serious concerns remain about ongoing reports of human rights abuses and about whether the Government is willing to move forward in an expeditious manner in a new direction. I am therefore pleased that I was able to have frank and extensive discussions with all of my counterparts on Myanmar's efforts to meet international concerns and expectations in the wake of the recent demonstrations. One of those discussions actually took place and was broadcast live on the national television.

On the downside, the Government has yet to provide assurances that it will lift the restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. I have stressed to the Government that the best way to make real their commitment to dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is to release her without delay, so that she can become a full partner in the dialogue that we all envisage.

A date has yet to be announced for the commencement of the substantive dialogue. It is important to note, however, that the parties are still in the initial stage of discussions, which include consultations between Aung San Suu Kyi and the Central Executive Committee of her National League for Democracy party, which, again, took place last week.

Finally, the Government has yet to provide an indication of the proposed timeframe for the next steps in its political road map following the completion of the National Convention on 3 September. While the Government has assured me that it intends to proceed with the drafting of a constitution and the holding of a referendum and elections, I stressed that the more clarity there is about the timing of those steps, the more credible the process will be.

Although my mission did not produce all the results that I had hoped for, I am in a position to report a number of positive outcomes, which I would like to highlight here. For the first time since she was last put under house arrest in May 2003, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was allowed on 8 November to pronounce herself publicly, through me, on her commitment in the interest of the nation to work with the Government through meaningful and time-bound dialogue, and on the role of the United Nations in that regard. Secondly, immediately following her statement on 9 November, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was allowed for the first time in four years to meet with the Central Executive Committee of the her NLD party and, for the second time, with the Minister for Relations, Aung Kyi.

Thirdly, the Prime Minister reiterated his Government's full confidence in and support for the Secretary-General's good offices and invited me to return to Myanmar — in his words, "again and again and again" — including to meet with the Constitutional Drafting Committee, once it is convened, to discuss ways of broadening the constitutional process. The Government also agreed in principle to the establishment of a small liaison capacity in Yangon in support of the good offices mission.

Fourthly, the Government further assured me that it will release more detainees and that no more arrests will be carried out. In that connection, it has agreed in principle to allow access to detainees by the ICRC. In the meantime, it has also agreed to an early visit by Special Rapporteur Pinheiro who — as I mentioned earlier — is currently in Myanmar, after four years of being denied access to the country. Fifthly, the Government further agreed in principle to consider the possibility of establishing a broad-based poverty alleviation commission. While stressing the need to respect its sovereignty in all matters, the Government signalled its openness to studying a concept paper for the proposed commission, and we are preparing such a policy paper.

Finally, an agreement was reached on an interim arrangement for the United Nations Country Team in Myanmar. In response to the Government's announcement the day before my visit that it would not want the current United Nations Resident Coordinator for Myanmar, Mr. Charles Petrie, to continue his services beyond his current term, the Secretary-General made clear his disappointment at the Government's decision and expressed his full confidence in the work of the United Nations Country Team and its leadership, which I also conveyed directly to the authorities. The Government has, however, agreed that as of 5 December, an Acting Resident Coordinator would take over pending the appointment of a new Resident Coordinator. The Planning Minister also reaffirmed the Government's policy of full cooperation with the United Nations Country Team.

I would also like to report some of the views and concerns expressed by the Government. In the course of my discussions, I was again assured that the recent demonstrations were instigated by a minority of elements opposed to the Government and supported largely from outside, that the demonstrations were limited to Yangon and Mandalay while the rest of the country had remained calm and that the Government's seven-step road map, including the National Convention, enjoyed the support of the majority of the people of Myanmar as demonstrated in popular rallies held around the country. In that regard, I was assured that, while some opposition groups did not participate in the National Convention, the constitutional referendum and elections would provide such groups with the opportunity to express their views.

The Government also considers that, while Myanmar is expected to meet international demands and concerns, Myanmar also expects the international community to recognize positive steps it may be taking in terms of cooperating with the United Nations. It was explained to me, for example, that Security Council action and punitive measures adopted by some Member States vis-à-vis Myanmar run contrary to the Government's expectations in that regard.

At the request of the Secretary-General, my visit to Myanmar was preceded by a new round of consultations in key regional capitals from 15 to 27 October, ahead of the upcoming Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and East Asia Summits from 19 to 21 November. I would like to share some of the main conclusions that emerged from the high-level consultations I had with leaders in China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, prior to visiting Myanmar. First, all the countries I visited expressed strong support for the Secretary-General's good offices process and pledged to translate such support by actively encouraging the leadership in Myanmar to continue to cooperate concretely with the United Nations so that the good offices role would produce tangible results. Secondly, all of the countries I visited support the United Nations good offices as the central track for the international community's approach to Myanmar and stress the need for any regional or other initiatives to be in support of the United Nations good offices role.

Thirdly, while all the countries I visited consider that sanctions against Myanmar are counterproductive, they accept that the international community should mobilize to help address Myanmar's humanitarian and socio-economic problems, commensurate with actual progress in the areas of concern to the international community.

On balance, the positive outcomes of this latest mission show that the Government of Myanmar, while stressing its sovereignty and independence, can be responsive to the concerns of the international community. Although high expectations continue to be borne out of the recent crisis, the situation today is qualitatively different from what it was a few weeks ago. Based on specific recommendations made through the Secretary-General's good offices, a process is now in motion that will hopefully lead to a substantive dialogue with concrete outcomes within an agreed timeframe between the leadership of Myanmar's State Peace and Development Council and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. In order to succeed, such a dialogue would require flexibility on all sides, but I am convinced that it is the only way forward for Myanmar. Sustained engagement by the United Nations through its good offices, with the support of the international community, will be needed in order to ensure that the process of dialogue that has been initiated will not be reversed. But we are far from the point of the irreversibility of this process at this time. And that is why it is important for the international community to carefully consider the concerns of the Government but to also listen to the views of Aung San Suu Kyi and other relevant parties now that they are able to speak for themselves.

From the perspective of the United Nations, it is clear from the recent events in Myanmar and from my latest consultations that the principles guiding our good offices role have become even more relevant as we move forward, and permit me, Sir, to reaffirm them here. First, the good offices role of the Secretary-General is not an event, but a process that will require time, patience and persistence. Secondly, given the complexity of the situation, the good offices cannot be a one-issue process — however important an issue may be — but rather needs to follow a comprehensive approach to address the multidimensional challenges facing Myanmar. Thirdly, the good offices process is not, however, an end by itself. It must yield tangible results and build on progress made each time there are missions to Myanmar. Fourthly, all those who can help, both inside and outside Myanmar, need to be encouraged to contribute to a solution to Myanmar's challenges. In this regard, the United Nations is grateful for the support of the domestic political forces in Myanmar, as well as the continued support of ASEAN and Myanmar's neighbours.

The Secretary-General has also made clear that a return to the status quo that existed before the crisis would be both unacceptable and unsustainable. In today's world, no country can afford to stay outside the irreversible trend towards stability, prosperity and democracy. It is the responsibility of every Government — including Myanmar's — to listen to its own people, to respond to legitimate popular demand and to respect in full the human rights of its citizens.

In the case of Myanmar, that implies starting without delay a dialogue between the Government and the opposition as a necessary part of any national reconciliation process, and addressing the humanitarian and socio-economic factors that underlie popular grievances.

The United Nations, meanwhile, is fully committed to working with the Government and the people of Myanmar to build on the current positive momentum in order to move Myanmar closer to the shared goals of national reconciliation, democracy, prosperity and full respect for human rights.

The President: I thank Mr. Gambari for his briefing. The floor is now open for those members who wish to speak.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I would like to begin by expressing my deep appreciation to Mr. Gambari for his briefing, and in particular for his efforts to broker a process of national reconciliation in Burma. His hard work and his tireless travel in the Asia region have helped to maintain high-level international engagement, which will be vital to bringing about real progress inside Burma.

His latest visit to Burma was clearly not easy. As he was confined for most of the time to Nay Pyi Taw, unable to choose who he would see and denied access to the Senior General, the approach of the Burmese authorities was not in line with the expectation of the Security Council, as set out in our presidential statement of 11 October (S/PRST/2007/37). We are also concerned at the effective expulsion of the head of the United Nations country team on the eve of Mr. Gambari's visit.

The biggest step forward came following Mr. Gambari's meeting with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. We welcome the statement that Mr. Gambari delivered on her behalf, in particular her commitment to pursue the path of dialogue constructively and her invitation to the Government and all relevant parties to join her in that spirit.

Now it is the turn of the regime in Burma to reciprocate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's readiness to cooperate. Initial meetings between her and the Government liaison officer and meetings with her party leadership are important, but are only first steps. We support Mr. Gambari's call on the authorities to unconditionally release Aung San Suu Kyi. The regime must remove the restraints on her access to her party and allow other opposition leaders, ethnic minority leaders and other stakeholders to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi and with one another freely and without impediment in order to ensure a genuine, inclusive and meaningful dialogue. We share Aung San Suu Kyi's view that the dialogue should be time bound, not least so that we can measure the results.

We welcome Special Rapporteur Pinheiro's current visit. We remain very concerned about the fate of those who participated in peaceful demonstrations in September and about the ongoing arrests and long sentences issued. It is important that we do not lose sight of the continuing arrests taking place. I understand that Suu Suu Nway, who has campaigned bravely and resolutely to rid Burma of forced labour, has recently been arrested by the authorities, a move that raises a question mark over the regime's commitment to Mr. Gambari to make no further such arrests.

We believe that Mr. Pinheiro should be allowed to address fully all these concerns and we look forward to his report to the Human Rights Council.

We would welcome Mr. Gambari's early return to Burma, and for him to be able to pay repeat visits on an unrestricted basis, as indicated to him by the Prime Minister of Burma. It is important that he be given freedom of movement and access to facilitate the process of reconciliation, not only with those he saw this time but also representatives of other civil society groups such as the 88 Generation students, the ethnic minorities, the monks and those still detained. Moves by the Burmese authorities to control Mr. Gambari's activities raise questions about their sincerity in engaging with the good offices mission.

The solution to Burma's problems will remain one for all Burma's people to find, with assistance from the United Nations and the international community. We, the international community, will need to continue to pressure and persuade the regime to make progress. The small steps forward described by Mr. Gambari today are welcome and could be the beginning of a process that achieves peace, prosperity and stability.

But they could also be a false dawn. Previous meetings and discussions failed to yield the results needed, so it is important that in pursuing the present opportunity, we stay united and focused on this issue to bring about the changes we all want to see.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): I too would like to thank Mr. Gambari for his briefing and for his continuing diplomatic efforts in Burma/Myanmar to promote and encourage the process of national reconciliation and democratization in that country. Slovakia strongly supports his activities carried out within the framework of the good offices mission of the Secretary-General.

We note Mr. Gambari's observation about certain progress reached in the talks with the Myanmar leadership, which we hope will lead to a meaningful, substantive and time bound dialogue aimed at reform, national reconciliation, democracy and full respect for human rights in Burma. We join the Secretary-General's call on the parties to redouble their efforts towards that end. We believe that the military leaders of Burma/Myanmar bear particular responsibility for creating appropriate conditions for the dialogue.

In this regard, we remain concerned about the continued violence used by the military leadership against political opponents, including crackdowns on peaceful demonstrations, arbitrary arrests and other gross violations of human rights in Burma/Myanmar. We are particularly concerned about the reports of forcible recruitment of children and their deployment in military actions by the Burmese army.

We welcome the return to Burma/Myanmar of Special Rapporteur Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, in the context of the mandate entrusted to him by the Human Rights Council, and we hope that the Council will also be briefed about the observations from this visit as soon as possible.

In that context, my delegation reaffirms its call on the regime of Myanmar to immediately stop the human rights violations and address the concerns of the international community, including through the immediate release of political prisoners. We believe that it is high time for the Government to embark on a credible and fully participatory reform process leading to a genuine democratic transition and national reconciliation in order to avoid further loss of human life and escalation of tensions with dire consequences not only for Burma/Myanmar but for the entire region.

We welcome the engagement of countries of the region with Burma/Myanmar in support of the Secretary-General's good offices and their positive pressure and influence on the Myanmar regime towards changing its unacceptable policies and starting a genuine process of democratization and national reconciliation. We believe this engagement must also be redoubled to achieve further and irreversible progress towards democracy in Burma/Myanmar.

Finally, we also believe that the continued active role of the Security Council is indispensable if the current efforts are to bring further results.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We too thank Mr. Gambari for his comprehensive briefing on his recent visit to Myanmar. His efforts on behalf of the good offices of the Secretary-General bear witness to the international community's commitment to, and unwavering support for, peace and stability in Myanmar. South Africa fully supported the Secretary-General's decision to send his Special Envoy, Mr. Gambari, to visit Myanmar for the second time in three months. We also wish to express our thanks to the Government of Myanmar for having allowed the Special Envoy to visit the country in fulfilment of his mandate.

South Africa welcomes recent developments in Myanmar that saw talks between opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and representatives of the Government. We further note with satisfaction that, for the first time in four years, Aung San Suu Kyi was able to meet with her fellow Central Committee leaders of the National League for Democracy. My delegation is optimistic that those positive steps will have a significant impact in bringing about much-needed political progress in Myanmar. The lifting of the curfew and the release of the detainees and even of some of the political prisoners, as mentioned by Professor Gambari, are proof to us that we are now in a new situation of progress in Myanmar. My delegation believes that only negotiations among all parties will lead to a resolution of the country's challenges. We wish to encourage all parties in Myanmar to remain committed to finding a long-term and lasting solution to the challenges facing their country.

South Africa welcomes the decision by the Government of Myanmar to allow Professor Paolo Sergio Pinheiro, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, to also visit Myanmar. We encourage the Government to continue to provide Mr. Pinheiro with all the cooperation necessary for the fulfilment of his mandate from the Human Rights Council.

South Africa continues to support the efforts by the international community, including the Secretary-General's good offices and Special Envoy Gambari's tireless efforts, to facilitate dialogue in Myanmar that will bring about a resolution of the country's challenges. We further commend the continuing role played by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its neighbouring countries in supporting Mr. Gambari's efforts and in assisting all the parties in Myanmar to resolve the challenges facing their country. We note that the forthcoming ASEAN Summit, to be held on 20 November 2007, will discuss the situation in Myanmar as part of its agenda. In that regard, South Africa stands ready to support the efforts of that regional body.

In conclusion, we urge the entire international community, in particular the Security Council, to rally behind the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy, Mr. Gambari, as well as Myanmar's neighbours, as they continue in their endeavours aimed at bringing about lasting peace in Myanmar.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): The United States deeply appreciates the efforts of Special Envoy Gambari and his team and welcomes his report to the Security Council. We have carefully tracked Mr. Gambari's efforts since we last met to fulfil the objectives unanimously laid down by this Council in our presidential statement of 11 October (S/PRST/2007/37), principally our call upon the Burmese regime

> "to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties and ethnic groups in order to achieve an inclusive national reconciliation with the direct support of the United Nations".

In that regard, the United States particularly welcomes the statement by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi that was released by Mr. Gambari on 8 November. We fully support her willingness to engage in what she described as "a meaningful and time-bound dialogue with the SPDC (State Peace and Development Council)" and underscore her expectation that such a dialogue should begin as early as possible. We are heartened by that message, and by the decision of the military regime to permit Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to communicate her views to the Special Envoy.

But those steps, however welcome, are not enough and do not yet constitute a fundamental shift. We believe that the Security Council, like Burma's neighbours and the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), must sustain its engagement and make clear the regime's outstanding obligations with respect to progress in the areas of concern to the international community.

First, the regime should fulfil its obligation to this body and begin a substantive national dialogue as early as possible, with no preconditions. In a

12 November statement, the Secretary-General stated that a process has been launched that will hopefully lead to a meaningful and substantive dialogue with concrete outcomes within an agreed time frame. Although the regime has permitted a Government liaison to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, to date that process is merely — in her words — preliminary consultations and does not yet constitute a dialogue. In addition, the SPDC announced through the State media on 6 November that tripartite talks involving the SPDC, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Mr. Gambari would be premature.

We believe, however, that the United Nations role could facilitate dialogue and would ensure that any dialogue is credible. That is why the Security Council and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi herself have welcomed the good-offices role of the United Nations. Whatever form the dialogue may take, inclusive talks are long overdue and have been called for repeatedly by Burma's neighbours, by the broader international community and, most recently, by this Council.

Secondly, there should be a stop to the ongoing arrests and detentions and an immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners and detainees, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. If General Than Shwe and other members of the SPDC are committed to cooperation with the United Nations, as they have stated, then they should release all political prisoners and detainees. Moreover, they should put a stop to the ongoing arrests and detentions of democracy activists. As was mentioned by my colleague from the United Kingdom just this past week, key activists such as Su Su Nway and U Gambira and members of the All-Burma Monks Alliance were arrested.

Thirdly, it is critical that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi be free to consult broadly so that she can engage in meaningful dialogue with the SPDC. In her statement, she announced that it is her duty to consider "the interests and opinions of as broad a range of political organizations and forces as possible", including Burma's ethnic minorities. It is unreasonable to expect that she will be able to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the Burmese generals and all concerned political parties and ethnic groups while she is under house arrest and her movements and consultations are tightly controlled. While the United States is pleased that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was finally permitted to meet with her fellow members of the National League for Democracy on 9 November, we believe that that positive development must be both extended and expanded.

Fourthly, the Burmese regime needs to allow Mr. Gambari to control his own itinerary and to meet with any individual group he deems relevant to his efforts. While we welcome the prospect of future and regular visits by Mr. Gambari to Burma, the regime must meet the demands of the Council and cooperate fully with them in order for his engagement to bear fruit. We define full cooperation as unrestricted access to all persons and parties in Burma. General Than Shwe's decision not to meet with Mr. Gambari on this most recent trip, as he has in the past, indicates a troubling lack of commitment on the part of the SPDC to working with the United Nations to promote the process of dialogue and national reconciliation. Another troubling indicator was the fact that the regime, not Mr. Gambari, arranged his meetings and dictated his schedule.

Our expectations are clear: the military regime's so-called road map to democracy, which excludes Burma's democratic and ethnic minority groups from meaningful participation, is demonstrably inadequate. A legitimate transition to democracy will require a process that is shaped by, includes and is supported by all of the people of Burma.

We acknowledge and appreciate the role of those countries in the region with influence over Burma, particularly its immediate neighbours and countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and call on them to reinvigorate their efforts to persuade Burma's ruling generals to accelerate steps to begin the inclusive dialogue on the peaceful transition to democracy that Aung San Suu Kyi and the Burmese people seek and that the United Nations is prepared to facilitate.

The United States fully supports the good offices mission and believes that this mechanism can facilitate the outcome that we all seek: a peaceful transition to a representative and responsible government in Burma. We greatly appreciate the role undertaken by Special Adviser Gambari, and fully support his efforts to sustain, consolidate and expand the modest progress made so far and the process that is under way now. The Secretary-General is clearly committed to the process, as is Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. We look to the Secretary-General and his team to build the capacity required for the Special Adviser to successfully engage with the parties on a sustained basis.

We echo the Secretary-General's statement that all relevant parties must redouble their efforts towards achieving national reconciliation, democracy and full respect for human rights. It is now time for General Than Shwe and the SPDC to demonstrate that they are equally committed to transition and national reconciliation by releasing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners and heeding her call to begin a meaningful and time bound dialogue. We also believe that the SPDC should avail itself of the United Nations good offices mission.

Through the efforts of the Special Adviser, the international community has offered the ruling generals a constructive means of engagement. In our view, it should be clear that in order to retain the support of the international community, this engagement must gain momentum and show real resolve. A process for process's sake will not be acceptable. The United States will continue to closely monitor events in Burma. We believe the Security Council should continue to balance engagement with appropriate pressure and calibrate both levels according to progress on the ground.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to thank the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Mr. Gambari, for his comprehensive briefing on his visit, and we reiterate our full support for his good offices. My delegation is encouraged by the positive tone of the message of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, which confirms — as if confirmation were still needed — that she is ready for dialogue. We now await a gesture in the same direction from the Burmese authorities.

The recent meetings of Aung San Suu Kyi with the Minister of Labour, Aung Kyi, and her meeting with the Central Executive Committee of her party are developments in the right direction. The freeing of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is, however, indispensable in order to enable her to fully play the important role which falls to her as part of genuine political dialogue.

My delegation has noted with interest in the statement of the Permanent Representative of Myanmar in New York that "Relations with the United Nations are the cornerstone of the foreign policy of our country". In this context, my delegation invites the United Nations authorities to translate that commitment into concrete action. Meeting with Mr. Gambari and initiating contacts with Aung San Suu Kyi are positive actions in terms of process, but that process must lead to some results. The majority of the demands included in the presidential statement of 11 October (S/PRST/2007/37) still remain to be met.

Belgium remains particularly concerned about the fate of the political prisoners and about the fact that several hundred demonstrators from August and September are still being held in detention. They must be freed without delay.

International mobilization must continue. In this context, all eyes will be on Singapore, where in the coming days we will see the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit, followed by the East Asia Summit, then by the ASEAN-European Union Commemorative Summit. All countries of the region agree that a return to the status quo ante is not an option. It is essential that the Myanmar authorities also realize this and factor it into their action.

The Security Council must continue to closely follow the situation in Myanmar and to speak with a unified and clear voice with regard to its expectations from the Burmese authorities on the basis of a timetable. Additionally, Belgium hopes that the General Assembly's draft resolution on renewing Mr. Gambari's good offices mission will enjoy the broadest possible support. My delegation is also attentively awaiting Special Rapporteur Pinhero's report to the Human Rights Council following his visit to the country.

In recent weeks, the European Union has adopted targeted restrictive measures. The European Union has also indicated its readiness to review those measures in the light of developments on the ground and the results of the good offices mission. The European Union recently appointed its own Special Envoy, Mr. Piero Fassino. He will coordinate the action of the European Union in order to support the good offices of Mr. Gambari and the action of the United Nations vis-à-vis Myanmar, and to assist Myanmar on the path towards democracy, respect for human rights, reconciliation and prosperity.

Belgium pays tribute to the tireless efforts of the Special Adviser, Mr. Gambari, and his team. My delegation looks forward to Mr. Gambari's return to Myanmar in the near future and the prospects for an agreement on a permanent presence of his team in the country.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, I wish to thank Mr. Gambari for his briefing. I would also like to express my appreciation for Mr. Gambari's tireless facilitation efforts in addressing the Myanmar issue and the positive progress that has been achieved.

China believes that Mr. Gambari's recent visit has yielded positive results on many aspects, including the following: visiting Myanmar earlier than scheduled; engaging in candid dialogue with the Myanmar leadership and several ministers; meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi and with Minister Aung Kyi, the liaison officer for this political dialogue; the positive statement by Aung San Suu Kyi on the dialogue process; and Aung San Suu Kyi's contacts with Minister Aung Kyi and with the leadership of the National League for Democracy. Also, Mr. Gambari was invited to visit Myanmar again. Moreover, the Myanmar Government has agreed to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit the country and is now receiving Mr. Pinheiro, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. All these positive signs show that the political process in Myanmar is on the right track and is moving in the right direction. We have noted that the Special Advisor was unable to meet the top leader of Myanmar, which gave rise to various speculations by the media. However, in our view, the benchmarks for evaluating whether the visit was a success or not should not rest on whom he met or where he has been. The judgement should be based on whether the good offices can move the overall situation of Myanmar forward in a positive direction. By this standard, Mr. Gambari's visit was, indeed, a success.

As mentioned by Mr. Gambari on many occasions, the issue of Myanmar cannot be resolved overnight and the Secretary-General's good offices are a process. While putting full confidence in the good offices, the international community should also show due patience for the process and results of those efforts. Rome was not built in a day. Myanmar is faced with various kinds of complex problems, and an appropriate and comprehensive settlement will, inevitably, take some time. The Secretary-General's good offices also need to be carried out in an incremental, step-by-step manner, with gradual results.

By inviting Mr. Gambari for another visit, Myanmar has shown its willingness to continue its contacts and cooperation with the United Nations. We encourage Mr. Gambari to further enhance mutual trust, to continue his candid dialogue with Myanmar and to put forward feasible policy and technical recommendations based on the national conditions of the country and provide facilitation and assistance for the political dialogue process. China also calls on the United Nations to focus its attention on how to help Myanmar develop its economy and improve the livelihood of its people.

The international community should make positive efforts to compliment the Secretary-General's good offices and provide constructive approaches for the settlement of the Myanmar issue. In essence, the Myanmar issue is an internal affair of the country and does not pose any threat to international or regional peace and security. The situation in Myanmar is gradually calming down and turning for the better. People's lives are coming back to normal. This is the common wish of every nation that sincerely wants to help Myanmar. The international community should welcome the current good momentum and push for further improvement of the situation.

Sanctions will not help resolve the issue, but rather further complicate the situation. Sanctions will even undermine the dialogue and the reconciliation process that is starting and interrupt the existing contacts on cooperation between Myanmar and the United Nations. This is the last thing that China, and all other countries in the region, wishes to see. The international community should create a relaxing, external environment for the dialogue process and encourage the Myanmar Government to continue its cooperation with the United Nations. It should also provide assistance to the country in its economic and social development. The comprehensive solution of the Myanmar issue relies mainly on the efforts of the Government and people of Myanmar through inclusive dialogue and full consultation.

In our view, the Myanmar issue mainly has three aspects. Firstly, the Myanmar Government needs to see how to improve the lives of its people and achieve comprehensive economic and social development. Secondly, it also needs to decide how to promote ethnic harmony and ensure that the fruits of development are shared by all. Thirdly, it needs to consider how it can expand political participation and promote democracy and the rule of law.

We sincerely hope — and believe — that through dialogue the Myanmar Government will listen carefully to the views of all parties and take further steps to address each and every issue relating to ordinary people's lives, to the rights and interests of ethnic groups and to democratization. We also hope that all parties to the dialogue can give top priority to maintaining national unity and stability and to promoting long-term development, which is in the overall interest of the country. We hope that mutual trust will be built, common ground will be expanded and a positive and flexible approach will be taken to push for more positive and tangible results from the dialogue.

China supports the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in playing a constructive role in the Myanmar issue. Stability and development in Myanmar are in the interest of all countries in South-East Asia. We hope that ASEAN countries will continue to help Myanmar as a family member and work together for harmonious development in the region.

China also welcomes the assistance offered to Myanmar by other countries through bilateral channels. We keep our minds open to all constructive ideas that may help properly resolve the Myanmar issue. At the same time, all assistance by the international community, no matter in what form, should obtain the understanding and cooperation from the Myanmar Government and people.

As a friendly neighbour of Myanmar, China has followed the Myanmar situation very closely. We sincerely hope Myanmar will return to stability, make progress in development and achieve political democracy and national harmony at an early date. We do not want to see a relapse into turbulence in the country. China will continue, in its own way, to support the Secretary-General's good offices and to help the Myanmar Government and people properly address the problems they are now facing. We are also ready to work with other members of the international community.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): I also would like to thank Mr. Gambari for his briefing and would like to welcome the determination he shows, as well as the personal determination of our Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, who really continues to try to move things forward in Burma. The statement by Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, read by the Special Envoy, and the possibility given the Nobel Peace Prize winner to meet leaders of the National League for Democracy, on the one hand, and Minister Aung Kyi, on the other, are steps in the right direction. These are modest but significant steps. For the first time in a long time, we are now able to see the possibility of real dialogue between the Government and democratic forces with the active support of the United Nations.

Thanks to the growing mobilization of the international community, the Burmese authorities seem to understand better and better that the return to the situation as it was before is no longer an option. I would like to stress the irreplaceable role of the countries in the region, and particularly the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), but also China in this development.

We must continue to work together towards common goals, which include an inclusive political dialogue, national reconciliation, the respect for human rights and the transition towards democracy. It is in this vein that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, Mr. Bernard Kouchner, recently visited several countries in the region, notably Singapore and Thailand, which have an essential role to play here.

What we see, however, at the moment, is only a timid first step and it remains to be confirmed. We are still a long way away from, and this has been stated by several speakers, the expectations expressed by our Security Council on 11 October, when the Council asked for the Myanmar authorities to cooperate fully with Mr. Gambari in the execution of his mission. The Special Envoy met a number of obstacles during that particular visit.

The absence of significant gestures in relation to political prisoners, for example, and those detained following the demonstrations constitutes for us a source of serious concern. The arrests continue and we have just learned, with consternation, of the arrest last night of one of the young figures of the democracy movement, Ms. Suu Suu Nwe. We are still awaiting replies to questions about those who have disappeared during the repression of the democratic movement. We hope that the visit of Mr. Pinheiro, to which France attaches a great deal of importance, will enable us to make quick and rapid progress on this subject.

It is essential that we remain vigilant and mobilized. Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi has shown her preparedness towards dialogue without any ambiguity. The ball is now in the court of the regime. They must respond to this offer by engaging in dialogue without conditions and, by lifting, without delay, the restrictions placed on her. She must be able to consult with the leaders of political parties, ethnic groups and civil society as much as she feels is necessary. The current discussions are not an end in themselves. They must lead quickly to a high-level dialogue, which, to use Aung San Suu Kyi's own words, must be serious and must be tied to a timetable. This process must bring on board all political forces that are represented in the country, as well as ethnic groups.

France has taken steps to strengthen the European Union's sanctions on Burma. Those targeted measures send a strong message to Burmese leaders without affecting the population, which is already suffering from the situation and living in precarious conditions. However, we believe that the international community must be prepared to react positively if genuine political dialogue begins in Burma. For France, the essential criterion is the beginning of genuine negotiations between the military and the opposition, once the latter is free to move about and speak freely.

The European Union has set the example by being prepared to review, or even lift, its targeted sanctions if true progress is made. It has also designated Mr. Fassino as special envoy. It would be useful if he were able to consult with Mr. Gambari and Mr. Pinheiro as soon as possible, in order that they can mutually reinforce their efforts.

Another approach under the aegis of the United Nations could perhaps entail the establishment of a trust fund for humanitarian and development projects. In that vein, France would favour the establishment of an informal group of friends to support the mission of the Special Envoy. That group could channel the support of the international community to Mr. Gambari. In time, it could also ensure the international community's follow-up to the reconciliation process that we expect will take place. Similarly, if approved, the establishment of a permanent liaison office would also constitute significant progress.

Following the tragic repression of the democratic movement, there is now a ray of hope for the Burmese people. It is up to them to nourish that hope with an eye towards the future; but they need our active support to do so. It is therefore now up to us not to let up on our efforts — to the contrary, now is the time for us to intensify our efforts towards national reconciliation and democratic transition, so as to emerge from the current crisis and move ahead. In that connection, it is crucial that Mr. Gambari return to Myanmar soon and that he convince the Burmese authorities to genuinely cooperate with him in order for him to make tangible progress. He has our resolute ongoing support in that endeavour.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): At the outset, I would like to express our great appreciation for the strenuous efforts made by Mr. Gambari in moving forward the good offices mandate of the United Nations. His briefing confirms the value of the challenging diplomatic process that he is conducting through his visits and talks. Last month, we referred to a window of opportunity that was opening for Myanmar. We are convinced that that window is indeed still open, due first and foremost to Mr. Gambari's wisdom and patience. It is encouraging to observe that the membership at large remains united in support of Mr. Gambari's mission. Once again, it will be crucial for the Security Council to seek his advice when considering how to deal with the situation in Myanmar.

In that regard, we are convinced that the Council's sustained attention has been, and remains, instrumental to the achievement of our common goals. At this stage, it is essential to take stock of the implementation of the requests made by the Council in its presidential statement of 11 October (S/PRST/2007/37).

Having listened to today's briefing, we believe that that implementation has not achieved all its objectives — and therefore is not completely satisfactory. I refer in particular to the limited access granted to Mr. Gambari during his latest visit and to the measures taken against the United Nations Resident Coordinator, which are not consistent with the stated commitment of the Myanmar authorities to cooperate fully with the United Nations.

It is certainly not our intention to underestimate the positive steps taken in recent days by the Myanmar authorities. As mentioned by Mr. Gambari, a path to constructive dialogue has been opened. Myanmar authorities remain committed to receive further visits and are considering the establishment of an in-country

United Nations presence. Aung San Suu Kyi has been allowed, for the first time in years, to meet with a Government representative and with members of the National League for Democracy's Central Executive Committee, as well as to release a public statement through Mr. Gambari, which is the clearest proof of her readiness to embrace a constructive dialogue on the democratic future of the country. However, those positive developments are still coupled with elements of concern that require further progress. The rejection of the trilateral dialogue mechanism proposed by Mr. Gambari shows that the Myanmar authorities are still reluctant to engage without preconditions in a credible, comprehensive and inclusive national reconciliation process.

Thousands of political detainees are still imprisoned. Arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearances continue to be reported. We hope that the current visit by United Nations Special Rapporteur Pinheiro, which is in itself a positive development, will not be subject to any restrictions and will create the conditions for substantive and immediate progress in that regard. Positive answers are required to the whole set of concerns expressed by the Human Rights Council and the Security Council.

The international community as a whole is increasingly recognizing that national reconciliation is the only viable recipe for peace and development in Myanmar. We praise the efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other neighbours of Myanmar to positively influence that process by conveying clear messages to the Myanmar authorities. Further engagement by regional players is still required, as an integral and essential element of any sustainable solution to the current problems.

Last week, the Italian authorities expressed these views to them at all levels, including through specific visits to the region. In fact, in Italy, the call of the people of Myanmar for peace, democracy and freedom continues to be at the top of the concerns of the Government, the Parliament, civil society and public opinion at large. There is no loss of focus or decrease in attention.

Italy welcomes with deep satisfaction the appointment of Mr. Piero Fassino as European Union (EU) special envoy for Myanmar. The primary objective of the special envoy's mandate is to support the United Nations and Mr. Gambari in the implementation of the good offices missions. All his efforts will be in that direction. We are convinced that this appointment will be essential to allow the EU to speak with one voice and to reaffirm the importance that all EU countries attach to development, democratic transition and respect for human rights in Myanmar. The EU looks forward with particular interest to the outcome of Mr. Gambari's efforts, as they are the major yardstick to review the restrictive measures adopted last month to target those responsible for the violent crackdown and the political stalemate in Myanmar.

Let me conclude by expressing the view that, at this crucial stage, we should not open a divisive debate on whether the glass is half empty or half full. Rather, we should identify the most effective way to support Mr. Gambari in his efforts to fill the glass completely, as the people of Myanmar are asking for nothing less than that.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing on his latest visit to Myanmar. We thank him for his considerable efforts to carry out the good offices mission of the Secretary-General. We view as hopeful the results of the Special Envoy's visit during which the leadership of Myanmar demonstrated its readiness to cooperate with the international community. We believe the conclusions he has drawn from that visit to be balanced and justified.

We take note of the steps taken by Nay Pyi Taw to bring the situation back to normal, establish dialogue with the opposition and prepare for democratic change. Those too are positive developments. In that regard, we appreciate in particular the Government's decision to establish a special commission to draw up a draft constitution. We think it an especially significant development that Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the opposition, has been given an opportunity to address the international community and to meet with members of the National League for Democracy. We hope that Aung San Suu Kyi's readiness for dialogue and cooperation with the authorities will speed up the process of national reconciliation.

While noting those positive changes, we nevertheless expect the Myanmar leadership to take further steps to implement the seven-point road map to democratic changes leading to a civilian form of Government.

In that respect, the international community, through the United Nations and regional organizations, must provide Myanmar with the necessary assistance in implementing that process. We await with interest the forthcoming Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit and hope that the other States of the region will pursue their efforts in support of establishing peace, stability and democracy in Myanmar. We are convinced that threats, pressure and sanctions exerted from outside the country are counterproductive and will only hinder the effort to solve the problems facing the country today.

We wish Mr. Gambari every success as he pursues his mission.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to thank Mr. Gambari for his work during his most recent visit to Myanmar and above all for the way in which he has performed his tasks.

Panama welcomes the presence at this meeting of the representative of Myanmar and is pleased that we also shall be hearing from the representative of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. We would have preferred, however, that both delegations had made their statements prior to the members of the Security Council.

Panama notes enthusiastically the successes registered by Mr. Gambari during his most recent visit to Myanmar. We also note in a particularly positive vein the invitation extended to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Pinheiro, to visit that country. We trust that the Human Rights Council will welcome his report upon his return.

We also note with concern the lack of progress in certain aspects of the Myanmar dialogue. In that regard, we feel that the failure to free political prisoners and the ongoing detainment of Aung San Suu Kyi are serious obstacles in the way of political progress in Myanmar.

Finally, we urge all nations —particularly those that, because of their geographic or cultural links, are closer and have better access to Myanmar — to leave no stone unturned in their efforts to pursue a satisfactory outcome in the political process under way. It would be most unfortunate if the protection of human rights in Myanmar, rather than move forward, were to regress to its previous status.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I thank Mr. Ibrahim Gambari for the information he has provided with regard to his recent visits to Myanmar and to some concerned Asian countries. We are happy to hear that some progress has been made in the agenda agreed by the parties in order to seek true national reconciliation, ensure respect for human rights, and prepare for a transition to democracy.

We also welcome the invitation extended to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, who is visiting the country from 11 to 15 of this month. We regret, however, the request made by the Government that the United Nations Resident Coordinator be withdrawn from that country.

Since the most recent crisis in October, and despite the fact that the authorities have reduced their military presence on the street and restored some fundamental freedoms, we continue to hear reports of violations of human rights and acts of repression against the political opposition and ethnic minorities. Although the Government's appointment of Minister Aung Kyi to coordinate dialogue between the authorities and the opposition is a useful decision, it is not sustainable for leaders of the opposition, such as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, to remain under house arrest.

Peru stresses that it is urgent for the Government to free all political prisoners, including those arrested during the recent demonstrations, and to take the necessary action to launch a genuine national dialogue. We also feel it important for the Government of Myanmar to take all necessary measures to address economic and humanitarian issues of concern to the population.

The increasing number of displaced and refugees is leading to a situation of instability that could threaten stability within the country and the region. In that context, Peru wishes to highlight the urgency of providing inclusive cooperation and dialogue as the only way to launch political changes that will lead to national reconciliation and economic changes conducive to stability and progress in the country. In the context of that task, it is very important that Myanmar's neighbours, the countries of South Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the international community continue to participate and cooperate.

Finally, now that we apparently have an opportunity to begin a process of positive change in Myanmar, the United Nations good offices are more necessary than ever before. We therefore support Mr. Gambari most firmly. His task is an especially delicate one, given the complexity of the situation in the country. We continue to await the future steps that may be taken by the Government of Myanmar to demonstrate its commitment to genuine national reconciliation.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks you, Sir, for having organized this meeting on the situation in Myanmar. We also thank Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, for his most enlightening briefing.

In that briefing, he informed us that the Secretary-General's good offices mission to Myanmar is beginning to produce positive results. We note with satisfaction the progress that has been made, particularly the lifting of the curfew, the withdrawal of the military presence from the streets, and the opportunities for action enjoyed by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, who was able to have fruitful meetings with the various actors in the crisis in Myanmar, particularly the Prime Minister and Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, although the progress achieved is not yet sufficient, particularly from the Government's side.

As for the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, his report gives us an even clearer picture of the human rights situation in that country. While she is still working in very straitened circumstances, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi has been able to meet with members of her party and with representatives of the authorities, particularly the Labour Minister, who has been appointed to act as liaison with her.

My delegation hopes, despite everything that Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi will soon be free, along with all the other political prisoners. We note her statement of optimism about the prospects for national reconciliation and that she is prepared to cooperate with the junta in power. In my delegation's view, in the light of such progress — limited as it may be — we should continue to encourage a patient process of dialogue with the junta in power and Myanmar society as a whole if national reconciliation is to be achieved in accordance with the road map as a step towards the gradual establishment of democracy in the country. It is in that spirit that we supported and adopted the presidential statement of 11 October (S/PRST/2007/37), which was very encouraging as far as Mr. Gambari's mission is concerned.

Congo, given the results that have already been achieved and the hope they give rise to, recommends that, in the spirit of reconciliation and conciliation, the good offices mission of the Secretary-General continue, conducted by Mr. Gambari, who was invited by the authorities of Myanmar to return. We welcome the efforts by the countries working to facilitate Mr. Gambari's mission. We also welcome the support of the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, in particular in convincing the authorities in Myanmar to make progress.

My delegation is, however, aware that the situation is still an issue of concern and must be patiently followed. We note the expulsion from the country of the head of the United Nations team in Myanmar, the human rights situation, the situation of political prisoners and the need to improve the living conditions of the people of Myanmar. In that way and in a spirit of openness and dialogue that must be inclusive and based on a precise timetable, Myanmar will finally be at peace.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): Ghana would like to join other members of the Council in thanking the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Under-Secretary-General Ibrahim Gamabari, for his briefing, which has highlighted some very significant and general positive developments in the country. In the same breath, we wish to commend the Secretary-General for his active support of the process of democratization in Myanmar, especially the leadership he has shown during the current crisis.

I would also like to pay tribute to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other key players in the region, both for the principled position they have taken in response to recent developments and, more importantly, for lending the Special Adviser much critical support in his interventions in Myanmar.

Ghana welcomes the recent moves by the authorities in Myanmar to reduce tensions in the country. We are pleased with the cooperation extended to Mr. Gambari in his efforts to bridge the gap between the Government and the opposition. That underscores the fact that the Government and people of Myanmar are ultimately the masters of their own destiny.

However, we note from the report of the Special Adviser that serious concerns remain about ongoing reports of human rights abuses. Moreover, the Government has not provided any assurances on lifting the restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, neither is there an indication of the commencement of dialogue nor of the proposed time frame for the next step in the political road map. We therefore call on the Government of Myanmar to embark on a purposeful track of dialogue with opposition groups. That will mean carrying out the aforementioned measures and others mentioned in the report of the Special Adviser. The Government must create the enabling conditions for national reconciliation and continue along the path that will bring about peace and genuine democracy in Myanmar.

We must also stress the unity of this Council. Its support for the Human Rights Council has been decisive, and we call on the Government of Myanmar to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Pinheiro, during his visits to the country for the sake of the well-being of the people of Myanmar.

Ghana reiterates its full support for the Special Adviser, whose tireless efforts are now yielding tangible results. We hope that everything will be done to sustain the new momentum for peace in Myanmar.

Mr. Al-Qahtani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to start by warmly welcoming Mr. Gambari here to New York as the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for Myanmar. We thank him for his positive statement, which always offers optimism. I would also like to thank him for the wisdom and foresight with which he considers the situation in Myanmar in that report.

It is very encouraging to see that the Special Adviser has been able to meet with high-level political officials in Myanmar and with the political parties, and that that Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights has been able to visit Myanmar for the first time in more than four years. It is also encouraging that the head of the opposition has been able to meet with members of her own party.

Although the situation in Myanmar is worrisome and bleak, those positive changes do give us hope, and we are confident that very soon important and inclusive dialogue will take place in a time-bound way between all of the various parties.

A few days ago, the Security Council had an important high-level meeting on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. There is no doubt that the crisis in Myanmar is a real example to be followed in giving flesh to our political statements and implementing them. We need to reinforce the part being played by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries in settling the crisis.

The work of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General in re-establishing constructive dialogue in Myanmar in order to bring together the political parties and the Government authorities is of primary importance. We need to establish a favourable climate that will encourage dialogue between all parties, and we reaffirm our support for the Special Adviser in his efforts to help Myanmar through the crisis. We also support the good offices of the Secretary-General.

We reiterate that the situation in Myanmar requires time and consistency by all parties, including the Government, which must redouble its efforts and set up a road map towards national reconciliation and release political prisoners. The members of the Security Council must do everything possible to avoid taking overly hasty decisions that would hinder the work of Mr. Gambari and the specialized and regional agencies in their efforts to continue their work.

The President: I will now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Indonesia.

Allow me to first join the previous speakers in thanking Mr. Gambari for his briefing. We commend his efforts to engage the leadership of Myanmar in addressing the complex and multifaceted challenges faced by the country.

The decisions by the Government of Myanmar to permit Mr. Gambari's visit earlier this month and to invite his return in few weeks are encouraging. We also recognize the significance of the decision by the Government to allow the visit by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Mr. Pinheiro.

We welcome the appointment of Minister Aung Kyi as liaison minister, his early contacts with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the decision by the Government of Myanmar to allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to meet key members of her National League for Democracy Party. We encourage the Government to further remove the restrictions on Daw Aung Suu Kyi as part of the effort to create conditions conducive to dialogue and reconciliation.

We equally welcome the readiness of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to cooperate with the Government of Myanmar to make this process of dialogue a success, as stated in her written statement, delivered by Mr. Gambari on 8 November 2007.

All of those developments represent the good faith of both parties, which is indispensable for a meaningful substantive dialogue to take place. It is our firm view that all parties concerned should make best use of this momentum to move ahead with the process to promote national reconciliation in an all-inclusive manner.

Indonesia appreciates the acknowledgement of the important role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in supporting the good offices of the Secretary-General. In this regard, we wish to recall the statement of ASEAN Ministers of 27 September 2007, in which the Ministers, inter alia, urged the authorities of Myanmar to resume national reconciliation with all parties, working towards peaceful transition to democracy, and to release all political detainees, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The forthcoming ASEAN Summit in Singapore this month will witness the signing of an ASEAN Charter, which embodies the vision of an ASEAN community, bound together by shared values that include democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that each and every ASEAN member country has the responsibility to honour the values shared by the group.

Moving forward, it is essential that the Security Council continues to speak in one voice to consistently support the Secretary-General's good offices, including the mission carried out by Mr. Gambari.

On the part of Myanmar itself, we again urge the Government to take further tangible steps for a genuine and inclusive dialogue. This would be a key instrument for achieving national reconciliation, which would constitute a foundation for Myanmar to move forward with its peaceful transition towards democracy.

On our part, it is Indonesia's strong commitment to continue to encourage Myanmar, bilaterally and within ASEAN, to address the challenges it faces in attaining such a noble goal. We urge the Government to continue to cooperate fully with Special Envoy Gambari and other United Nations mechanisms.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate our firm support for the good offices of the Secretary-General, which emphasize the comprehensive engagement of the United Nations with Myanmar.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Security Council. I shall now call on the representatives of Myanmar.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): Mr. President, I wish to thank you for this opportunity to speak before the Security Council. I am particularly happy to see Indonesia, a fellow member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), presiding over this meeting. I understand that I will be followed by my colleague, the Permanent Representative of Singapore, who will speak in his national capacity. I also understand that the Permanent Representative of Japan, another country from our region, will be taking the floor.

I wish to thank Special Envoy Gambari for his briefing. His vast experience and consummate diplomatic skills have stood him well in carrying out the good offices role of the Secretary-General mandated by the General Assembly. It is noteworthy that, during his visit, he had the opportunity to meet with the Prime Minister, General Thein Sein, and several relevant Ministers. He also met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and representatives of ethnic nationalities, senior monks, political parties and civil society. I congratulate him on the fruitful outcome of his mission. His accomplishment is all the more commendable in view of the unwarranted pressure on the part of some quarters to unduly hasten his visit to Myanmar. This created a less than favourable environment for him to carry out his good offices mandate. However, he managed to overcome the challenge.

Allow me, Sir, to highlight the notable developments in Myanmar since Ambassador Gambari's recent visits, although he has touched on most of them. Peace and stability have been restored in Myanmar, and life has returned to normal all over the country. The curfew has been lifted in toto, and there are no further arrests in connection with the demonstrations. Almost all those detained in connection with the September unrest have been released. As of 7 November, the number stood at 2,836. Only 91 now remain in custody. They have been found to have been involved in unlawful activities, including conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism. Action is being taken against them in accordance with the law. Ambassador Gambari has also informed the Council of this.

A 54-member committee has been constituted to draft a new constitution. A Minister was appointed on 8 October to liaise with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The appointment was welcomed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in the statement issued by Ambassador Gambari on her behalf on 8 November in Singapore. She also confirmed that the first meeting between her and that Minister on 25 October 2007 was constructive. She has stated that, in the interest of the nation, she stands ready to cooperate with the Government in order to make the process of dialogue a success.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met with the senior members of her party on 9 November 2007. Following the meeting, the spokesman of the National League for Democracy issued a statement saying that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi believed that the Government "was serious and really willing to work for national reconciliation". A United Nations press release issued on 7 November 2007 affirmed that

> "the Prime Minister reiterated his Government's full support for Mr. Gambari's efforts on behalf of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and invited him to return to Myanmar in continuation of the good offices process".

This is in line with Myanmar's longstanding position of cooperation with the United Nations, a cornerstone of Myanmar's foreign policy.

We are cooperating not only with the Secretary-General and Ambassador Gambari in connection with the good offices role mandated by the General Assembly, but also with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, who is currently in my country. He is receiving the full cooperation of my Government.

It is disappointing that, notwithstanding the positive developments, some continue to express scepticism with regard to the commitment of the leadership and the pace of the ongoing process. It must be noted that the challenges facing Myanmar are complex and delicate. We are promoting national unity and, at the same time, a national reconciliation process, and we are also laying the firm foundation for an enduring democracy.

Ambassador Gambari himself has mentioned, time and again, that the good offices role of the Secretary-General is a process and not an event. It must also be acknowledged, as confirmed by Ambassador Gambari in his statement this afternoon, that there is significant progress in Myanmar. The meetings between the Minister for Relations, U Aung Kyi, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi have got off to a good start, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi herself is optimistic about the process. Today, the nation can look forward with high expectations to the birth of a new era. Both parties to the national reconciliation process have expressed satisfaction with the ongoing dialogue. This is a time for encouragement and not for undue outside pressure. The good offices role mandated by the General Assembly should be allowed to play its catalytic role in facilitating the national reconciliation process. The Council should provide encouragement and refrain from taking any action at this critical juncture.

We thank the members of the Council who see things as they are and welcome the positive developments. We appreciate that.

There are situations in the world that threaten international peace and security and deserve the undivided attention of the Council. The situation in Myanmar is certainly not among them. Myanmar does not pose any threat to regional or international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): I would like to thank Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari for his briefing.

Singapore is currently the Chairman of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). We are, however, making this statement in our national capacity.

At the last meeting of the Security Council to discuss the situation in Myanmar, my delegation had referred to the efforts of the United Nations, as embodied by Mr. Gambari, as unique and irreplaceable. This description remains valid. Mr. Gambari continues to have the most critical quality for the role he is playing, and that is the trust of both the Myanmar Government and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Both parties see value in his continued engagement. To date, no one has done better than Mr. Gambari.

The situation in Myanmar is extraordinarily complex and Mr. Gambari's report only confirms that. There are mixed signals. On the one hand, there continue to be reports of arbitrary arrests in Myanmar and we remain very concerned. We call for the release of those detained during the recent protests, as well as previously detained political prisoners.

We are disappointed by the Myanmar Government's decision to end the assignment of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Coordinator Charles Petrie. Mr. Petrie and UNDP, along with other United Nations agencies, have consistently tried to help improve socio-economic conditions in Myanmar. That move by the Myanmar Government sends the wrong signal about its commitment and willingness to work on those crucial issues with the United Nations.

But there have also been positive indications coming from Myanmar, which we should not dismiss. It is a positive sign that the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, has been allowed to visit Myanmar after a four-year hiatus. Minister for Labour Aung Kyi has been appointed as the liaison person between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the Myanmar Government. That is another positive step that hopefully sets the stage for serious discussions and a genuine dialogue.

While we are disappointed that Mr. Gambari did not meet Myanmar's head of State, Senior General Than Shwe, during his last visit to Myanmar, we are encouraged that Mr. Gambari had access to the rest of the Myanmar leadership, including Prime Minister Thein Sein and Myanmar's State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) Authoritative Team. Mr. Gambari also met Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as other stakeholders, including members of the National League for Democracy (NLD), the National Unity Party and civic groups. We welcome the partial lifting of political restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, which allowed her to meet fellow NLD officials on 9 November.

The most significant development was the statement of Daw Aung Suu Kyi, which Mr. Gambari delivered to the international community on her behalf on 8 November. That was the first time in a very long time that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's views had been heard by the outside world. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's statement underscored her commitment to discussions with the regime in order to achieve national reconciliation. She welcomed the appointment of the liaison person Minister Aung Kyi, described their first meeting as a constructive one and looked forward to further discussions. She stated her expectation for a meaningful and time bound dialogue with the SPDC leadership. She said that she stood ready to cooperate with the Government in order to make the process of dialogue a success. Most important, she welcomed the necessary good offices role of the United Nations.

Of course, it would have been much better had Daw Aung San Suu Kyi been released and allowed to deliver the remarks herself. In that regard, we hope that the Myanmar Government will release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi immediately and unconditionally so that she can participate fully in the process of political dialogue and national reconciliation.

Nevertheless, it is extremely significant that in her statement, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed clear support for the current process and the good offices role of the United Nations. We are therefore encouraged that the Myanmar Government has invited Mr. Gambari back for another visit. We urge the Myanmar Government to continue to engage Mr. Gambari at the highest level and to grant him full access to all parties in Myanmar. National reconciliation will require commitment and dialogue at the highest level.

The Myanmar Government also needs to establish a meaningful, results-oriented and time bound political dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Such a process should be inclusive and involve all stakeholders, including the various ethnic groups. We are heartened by NLD spokesman Nyan Win's press statement of 9 November that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi believed the ruling authorities have the will for national reconciliation and that she intends to work with Minister Aung Kyi.

The international community should respect the views of Daw Aung San Sun Kyi and do what we can to support Mr. Gambari in his mission. We should not make an already complex mission more difficult by precipitate moves. The progress that Mr. Gambari has made so far is not insignificant. We have to recognize that a genuine political dialogue leading to national reconciliation is a long-term process. There are no quick fixes and we should not complicate the process by injecting unreasonable time lines or unrealistic expectations. What we can do is to support Mr. Gambari and encourage all the parties involved to engage in a meaningful dialogue. We would only be doing the Myanmar people and ourselves a major disservice if we were to prematurely give up on the United Nations good offices mission. Mr. Gambari continues to represent our best hope for progress. He should be invested with the requisite support, authority and prestige.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its regional partners fully support Mr. Gambari's efforts. Singapore's Foreign Minister, George Yeo, recently met his counterparts in China, Japan and India for informal consultations on how the region could support the national reconciliation process in Myanmar. Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, has invited Mr. Gambari to brief the leaders of the East Asia Summit in Singapore next week, on 21 November. That will be an important opportunity for Mr. Gambari to personally update and engage Summit leaders from ASEAN, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand. This can only strengthen the Secretary-General's good offices mission. We look forward to welcoming Mr. Gambari to Singapore next week and to his participation in the EAS discussions on Myanmar.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I thank the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, for his briefing on his most recent visit to Myanmar. Japan welcomes the positive outcome of Mr. Gambari's visit to Myanmar this time.

The statement issued by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, read out loud by Mr. Gambari on her behalf, is a clear indication of her willingness to engage in a meaningful and time bound dialogue with the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) leadership. On the other hand, the decision of the Government of Myanmar to allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to meet with the leaders of her party, the National League for Democracy, and the holding of the second meeting between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Minister Aung Kyi on 9 November were positive moves by the Myanmar Government.

We owe much of those positive developments to the efforts of Mr. Gambari and believe that it is important to continue our support for the good offices of the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser.

It should be noted that Mr. Gambari could not meet some of the people he had wished to meet. Therefore, we strongly call on the Government of Myanmar to continue to cooperate fully with the United Nations and its mission and to engage with Special Adviser Gambari.

As was emphasized by the Special Adviser himself, the Secretary-General's good offices is a process and not an event. One mission by itself cannot solve everything. We therefore believe that it is all the more important for the international community to continue to act in concert and support such efforts. We strongly hope that the Government of Myanmar will take advantage of the opportunity to realize a genuine dialogue that includes all relevant parties, in order to achieve national reconciliation.

Japan is ready to act constructively, in close cooperation with the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser, as well as with other interested countries, particularly those of ASEAN and countries of the region, in order to improve the situation in Myanmar and to help solve the issues through dialogue between and among the parties concerned in Myanmar.

The President: There are no other speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussions on the subject.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

United Nations

S/PV.5778

Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5778th meeting

Tuesday, 13 November 2007, 6.50 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Natalegawa	(Indonesia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	Congo	Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Peru	Ms. Tincopa
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Kuwari
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Mlynár
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Report of the Secretary-General on Eritrea and Ethiopia (S/2007/645)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

The meeting was called to order at 6.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2007/645)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/645, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

> "The Security Council stresses the importance of the commitment of both Ethiopia and Eritrea to lay the foundation for sustainable peace in the region and, aware of the responsibilities of the United Nations under the Algiers Agreements, remains determined to encourage and assist both countries in attaining this objective.
>
> "The Security Council underscores the acceptance without preconditions by both Ethiopia and Eritrea of the final and binding delimitation decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC).
>
> "The Security Council urges the parties to take concrete steps to implement immediately and without preconditions the delimitation decision of the EEBC, taking into account the parties' commitments regarding the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) as expressed at the EEBC meeting of 6-7 September 2007 and to comply fully with the Algiers Agreements and prior Security Council resolutions and statements of its President, including on the issue of demarcation.
>
> "The Security Council calls upon the parties to refrain from using force and to settle their disagreements by peaceful means, to normalize their relations, to promote stability between them and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace in the region.
>
> "The Security Council confirms the parties' primary responsibility to resolve the border issue and their other differences, and expresses its readiness to endorse the commitments made by both parties with respect to demarcation and normalization.
>
> "The Security Council strongly supports the Secretary-General in any efforts to facilitate these processes.
>
> "The Security Council commends and fully supports the continuing operations of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), underscores the importance for the parties to provide UNMEE with the necessary access, assistance, support and protection required for the implementation of its mandate and welcomes the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General towards the earliest appointment of a Special Representative."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/43.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.